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THE CARTOON HISTORY
OF THE

UNIVERSE

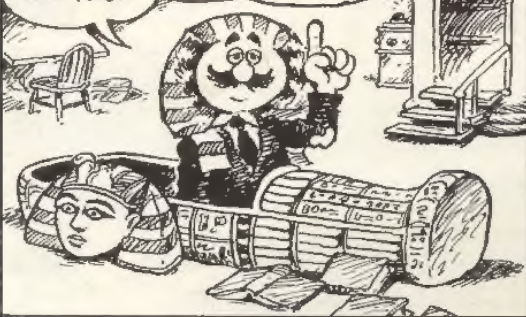
Volume 4
PART OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT

1400-586 B.C.



Watch

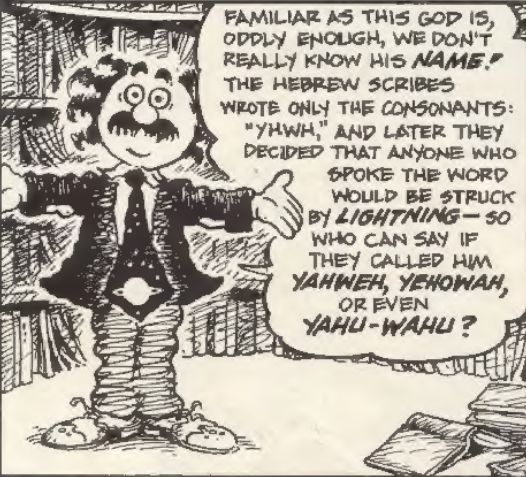
IN THE LAST VOLUME, THE TIME MACHINE SHOWED US THE EARLY CIVILIZATIONS OF SUMER AND EGYPT, AND WE NOTED SOME NOMADS MOVING BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN THE TWO."



NOW WE'LL SEE WHAT HAPPENED TO THESE TRIBES WHEN THEY ESCAPED FROM EGYPT AND BEGAN TO WORSHIP A GOD WHO, DESPITE SOME EARLY SETBACKS, HAS HAD **QUITE** A SUCCESSFUL CAREER."



FAMILIAR AS THIS GOD IS, ODDLY ENOUGH, WE DON'T REALLY KNOW HIS **NAME**." THE HEBREW SCRIBES WROTE ONLY THE CONSONANTS: "YHWH," AND LATER THEY DECIDED THAT ANYONE WHO SPOKE THE WORD WOULD BE STRUCK BY **LIGHTNING**—SO WHO CAN SAY IF THEY CALLED HIM **YAHWEH**, **YEHOWAH**, OR EVEN **YAHU-WAHU**?



MOAN! THE THINGS YOU GOTTA PUT UP WITH IN THIS BUSINESS...



WELL, WE CARTOON CHARACTERS CAN TAKE THAT KIND OF ABUSE, SO I'LL KEEP TRYING TO CALL THINGS BY THEIR **RIGHT NAMES**—BUT **YOU** BE CAREFUL, IN CASE YOU'RE **READING ALOUD**... HEH HEH HEH...



THE CARTOON HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSE

VOLUME 4

PART
OF THE

OLD TESTAMENT

BY

LARRY GONICK

BY WHATEVER NAME IT HAS BEEN CALLED — AND IT'S BEEN CALLED PLENTY — THE STRETCH OF GROUND BETWEEN EGYPT AND THE EUPHRATES RIVER HAS HAD AN UNUSUALLY **VIOLENT** HISTORY. WAY BACK IN THE STONE AGE, THE PEOPLE OF **JERICHO** BUILT THE WORLD'S FIRST **WALLED CITY** FOR PROTECTION AGAINST THEIR NEIGHBORS.

YAHOO!

WAHOO!

BLUNCH



LATER, THE LAND WAS INVADIED BY THE SUMERIANS, WHO WANTED TIMBER FROM THE CEDARS OF LEBANON...



...BY THE EGYPTIANS, FOR THE COPPER AND TURQUOISE IN THE SINAI...



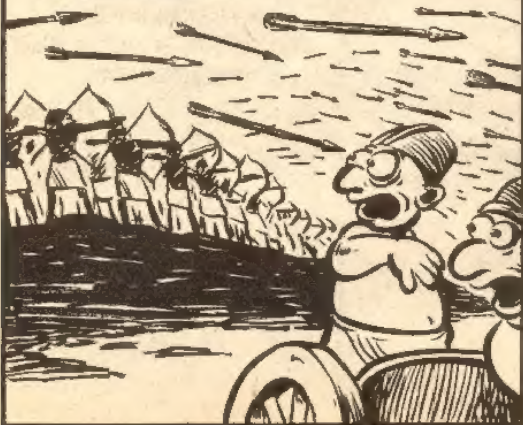
...BY THE "HYKSOS," (SEE VOL. 3) JUST BECAUSE IT HAPPENED TO BE IN THE WAY...



...BY THE HITTITES, WHO WANTED CONTROL OF THE TRADE ROUTES...



...BY THE EGYPTIANS AGAIN, TO EXPEL THE HITTITES...



...AND BY THE ISRAELITES, PHILISTINES, ASSYRIANS, BABYLONIANS, SCYTHIANS, PERSIANS, MACEDONIANS, ROMANS, ARABS, CRUSADERS, TURKS — BUT WE'RE GETTING AHEAD OF OURSELVES, AND YOU GET THE IDEA ...



THEN AS NOW, THE COUNTRY'S LANDSCAPE WAS UNUSUALLY VARIED. ON THE COAST WERE INDEPENDENT CITIES, CENTERS OF TRADE AND SOURCE OF THE PRECIOUS **PURPLE DYE** THAT GAVE THE LAND ONE OF ITS NAMES, **CANAAN** (= "LAND OF PURPLE" IN UGARITIC).



NEXT COMES THE COASTAL PLAIN, PLOWED BY FARMERS AND CUT BY GULCHES...



...WHICH CARRY THE RUN-OFF FROM THE MOUNTAINS, WHERE NOMADS AND VILLAGERS COEXISTED...



FURTHER INLAND, THE HILLS GET WILDER UNTIL THEY DROP OFF TO THE DEEP, STEEP VALLEY OF THE JORDAN RIVER, THE DEAD SEA, AND THE OASIS OF JERICHO, 1300 FEET BELOW SEA LEVEL.



BEYOND JORDAN, THE LAND RISES AGAIN, FINALLY LEVELLING OFF IN THE ARABIAN PLATEAU.



WHEN THEY WEREN'T BEING INVADED, THE PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF CANAAN WOULD FIGHT WITH **EACH OTHER.**



FOR NOW, WE'RE CONCERNED WITH PART OF THE NOMADIC GROUP KNOWN AS THE **HEBREWS**, SO GET SET—IT'S A PRETTY VIOLENT TALE...

BEYOND A CERTAIN POINT, HEBREW ORIGINS ARE LOST IN THE MISTY PAST. THEN ABRAHAM, HIS WIFE SARAH, HIS NEPHEW LOT, AND THEIR SERVANTS AND FLOCKS EMERGED FROM UR IN SUMER, HEADING FOR GREENER PASTURES IN CANAAN.



ONCE THEY ARRIVED, IT'S SAID, ABRAHAM AND LOT FATHERED MANY TRIBES. WE'LL SKIP THE DETAILS AND JUST MENTION THAT ABRAHAM BEGAT ISAAC...



ISAAC BEGAT JACOB...



...WHO CHANGED HIS NAME TO ISRAEL ("POWER WITH GOD") AFTER WRESTLING WITH AN ANGEL IN A LATE-NIGHT ANXIETY ATTACK.



JACOB BEGAT THE TWELVE SONS OF ISRAEL...



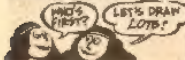
...ONE OF WHOM, JOSEPH, ENDED UP IN EGYPT WITH AN EGYPTIAN WIFE AND AN EXCELLENT GOVERNMENT JOB.



DURING HARD TIMES IN CANAAN, JOSEPH OFFERED HIS KIN SOME GOOD LAND IN THE EGYPTIAN DISTRICT OF GOSHEN, AND THERE THEY SETTLED HAPPILY, UNTIL, SOMETIME AFTER JOSEPH'S DEATH, THEY WERE ENSLAVED. SO SAYS THE BOOK OF GENESIS.



LOSING HIS WIFE WHEN SODOM WENT UP IN SMOKE, LOT AND HIS DAUGHTERS FLED TO THE LONELY HILLS ABOVE THE DEAD SEA. THERE, WITHOUT ANY ELIGIBLE HUSBANDS, THE GIRLS GOT THEIR FATHER DEAD DRUNK AND SEDUCED HIM ONE BY ONE.



THEY WERE TRYING TO GET CHILDREN TO SUPPORT THEM IN THEIR OLD AGE.




THE RESULT WAS TWO BOYS NAMED MOAB AND BEN AMMI, SAID TO BE THE ANCESTORS OF THE MOABITES AND AMMONITES, TWO TRIBES WHICH MUST HAVE HAD SOME CONFUSING RELATIONSHIPS.




DOUBLE EXODUS

A FEW THINGS THE BIBLE *DOESN'T* MENTION ALSO HELP TO UNDERSTAND MATTERS:

- 
- 1) THERE WERE PLENTY OF OTHER SLAVES IN EGYPT, TOO.
 - 2) MOST OF CANAAN WAS UNDER EGYPTIAN RULE, AND SOME PEOPLE THERE WERE STIRRING UP TROUBLE.
 - 3) THERE WERE ALMOST CERTAINLY SOME WELL-TO-DO SEMITES IN EGYPT, MARRIED TO EGYPTIANS AND OTHER-WISE "ASSIMILATED."

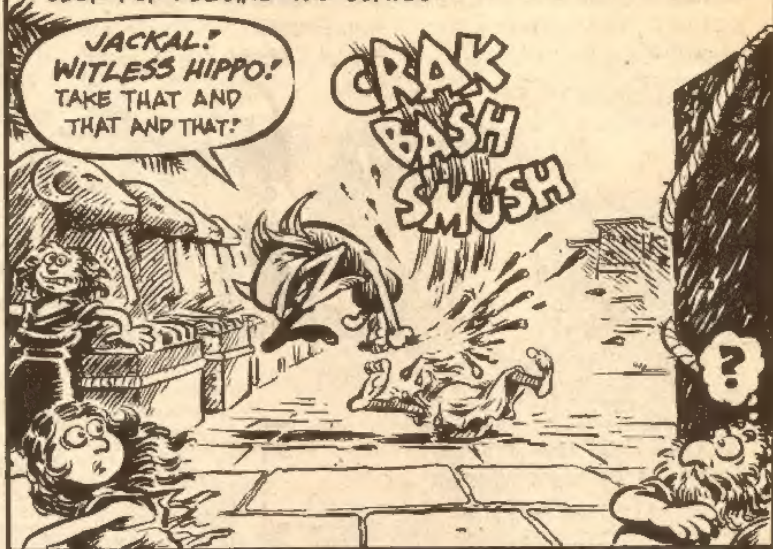
IT MAY HAVE BEEN FROM THIS CLASS THAT **MOSES**, THE LIBERATOR, CAME.

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT!
WHAT'S HE CRYING ABOUT?

WE MAY WELL DOUBT THE STORY OF MOSES' BIRTH , BUT THIS MUCH SEEMS CERTAIN: "MOSES" IS AN EGYPTIAN NAME; MOSES WAS RAISED IN COURT AS AN EGYPTIAN; AND HE MUST HAVE HAD FORMAL, "COOL" EGYPTIAN MANNERS. LET'S IMAGINE HIM, THEN, AS **HALF EGYPTIAN**, A BIT OF A LONER, WITH A LOT OF RE-PRESSED ANGER, WHICH HE COULDN'T ALWAYS CONTROL.



IN THE FIRST REPORTED EPISODE OF HIS ADULT LIFE, MOSES THREW A TANTRUM AND **MURDERED** AN OVER-SEER FOR ABUSING THE SLAVES.



HE SKIPPED THE COUNTRY AND TOOK REFUGE WITH **JETHRO**, A MIDIANITE CHIEF IN THE SINAI.

AN EGYPTIAN PRINCE?

UH, ACTUALLY, I'M HALF HEBREW...

BLESS ME? SO AM I?



JETHRO MUST HAVE FILLED THE FUGITIVE IN ON LOCAL HISTORY, POLITICS, AND RELIGION—INCLUDING HIS OWN ROOTS?

IT IS SAID—HE WHO WIELDS THIS **BRAZEN SERPENT** WILL FREE THE PEOPLE OF ABRAHAM!




JETHRO ALSO GAVE MOSES HIS DAUGHTER **ZIPPORAH**.

WOW! A REAL EGYPTIAN PRINCE!

TH' SHAME OF IT! ME AND THIS NOMAD SHE-CAMEL!... SIGH...



 WE'VE ALL HEARD HOW THE BABY MOSES WAS CAST ADRIFT ON THE Nile, BUT BEFORE BELIEVING IT, WE SHOULD CONSIDER THAT THE ABANDONED-BABY-WHO-BECOMES-KING THEME ALSO APPEARS IN THE LIVES OF SARGON OF AKKAD, OEDIPUS REX, CYRUS OF PERSIA, ROMULUS+REMUUS, AND OTHERS. MANY SCHOLARS BELIEVE THE STORY WAS INVENTED BY "OFFICIAL BIOGRAPHERS" TO GIVE THESE PRINCES THE RIGHT PARENTS.

THIS, IF MOSES WERE ACTUALLY AN EGYPTIAN, THE BULRUSHES STORY SERVES TO MAKE HIM **POUF POUF** AN **HONORARY HEBREW**.

BUT REALLY IT'S JUST SO MUCH **BULRUSH**, MIGHT ONE SAY?



ON THE OTHER HAND, IT'S TRUE THAT PEOPLE OFTEN EXPOSED UNWANTED BABIES IN THOSE DAYS, SO WHO KNOWS?

'BYE, SON! HAVE A NICE TIME IN THE **PALACE**!!

YOU WON'T FORGET WHO GAVE YOU YOUR FIRST BIG **BREAK**?



WHILE PONDERING THE SITUATION, MOSES HAD A VISION: A **BURNING BUSH** TOLD HIM TO GO HOME AND FREE THE SLAVES."

JUST SAY THAT **I AM** SENT YOU."

B-BUT I CAN BARELY SPEAK HEBREW!

I GET AN INTERPRETER...

LIKE JACOB BEFORE HIM, MOSES HAD A BAD ANXIETY ATTACK THE NIGHT BEFORE ARRIVING. IN A FRENZY, HE MADE ZIP-PORAH **CIRCUMCISE THEIR SON**.

IT'S AN OLD EGYPTIAN CUSTOM!

AT THIS HOUR?

CAME THE DAWN, HE CONTACTED **AARON** AND **MIRIAM**, THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF THE ISRAELITES.

WHO SENT YOU?

OH, HE ("YA-KUWA") DID!

AND A TIP O' THE HIPPO TO OK MARTIN BUBBER!

WHILE AARON AND MIRIAM SPREAD HIS MESSAGE TO THEIR PEOPLE, MOSES NEGOTIATED WITH PHARAOH.

SEE THESE FROGS? THESE ARE **YAHU'S** FROGS."

AS THE TALKS DRAGGED ON, THE SLAVES WENT ON A **LOOTING SPREE**.

FINALLY, PHARAOH GAVE IN, AND A "MIXED MULTITUDE," HEADED BY MOSES, THE ISRAELITE PRIESTS, AND **JOSEPH'S MUMMY**, ESCAPED IN THE NIGHT.

THEY DITCHED SOME EGYP-TIAN TROOPS IN A MARSHY TIDELAND, AND MIRIAM LED THE WOMEN IN SONG.

"SING YE UNTO YA-KUWA... ♪ THE HORSE AND ITS RIDER HATH HE THROWN INTO THE SEA..."

THEY WERE FREE - TO WANDER A WEIRD WILDERNESS WITHOUT FOOD, WATER, OR FRIENDS. (ONE DESERT TRIBE, THE AMALEKITES, WAS ETERNALLY CURSED FOR THEIR RAIDS AT THIS TIME.)



BUT MOSES' STINT IN MIDIAN HADN'T BEEN WASTED. HE KNEW ABOUT SECRET SPRINGS AND ODD EDIBLES LIKE *MANKA*, THE SECRETION OF A DESERT INSECT.

BLECH!
BUG POOP?
I LONG FOR THE FLESHPOTS OF EGYPT!..

I KNOW "FLESHPOTS" SOUNDS SEXY, BUT IT JUST MEANS A KETTLE OF STEW...

KETTLE OF STEW SOUNDS PRETTY SEXY RIGHT NOW?



TEMPERS BEGAN RUNNING SHORT, AND MOSES HAD HIS HANDS FULL JUDGING DISPUTES, WHEN *JETHRO*, HIS FATHER-IN-LAW, ARRIVED AND SUGGESTED:

SON-IN-LAW, THIS IS TOO MUCH FOR ONE MAN! YOU NEED *LAWS*... JUDGES... MAYBE EVEN LAWYERS... YOU NEED TIME FOR YOUR FAMILY... ZIPPORAH IS MISERABLE...

LAWS?
WHAT *LAWS*?



OH, THE USUAL STUFF... "THOU SHALT NOT KILL..." THAT'S BIG WITH US MIDIANITES...

HA...
'COURSE I AL-
READY *BROKE*
THAT ONE - BUT
TELL ME MORE...



SO, ONE WILD AND STORMY DAY, MOSES ASSEMBLED THE PEOPLE BEFORE THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD...

KABOO!

THAT YE MAY KNOW THE FEAR OF YAHUWA.



THEN HE SCALED THE PEAK TO GET THE LAWS DIRECTLY FROM THE LORD'S MOUTH!

YAHU!
I AM HERE!

HE'S SLIPPED HIS SQUIFF!



MOSES WAS GONE FOR THE LONGEST TIME, BEING SOMETHING OF A PERFECTIONIST.

"COMON, LORD, LET'S TRY AND HOLD IT TO TEN—I CAN ONLY CARRY SO MUCH STONE."

CRACK RUMBLE

MANY BIBLICAL SCHOLARS SEE THIS ASSEMBLY BEFORE THE MOUNT AS THE MOMENT WHEN **ALL ISRAEL** BEHELD AND FEARED THE GOD OF MOSES...

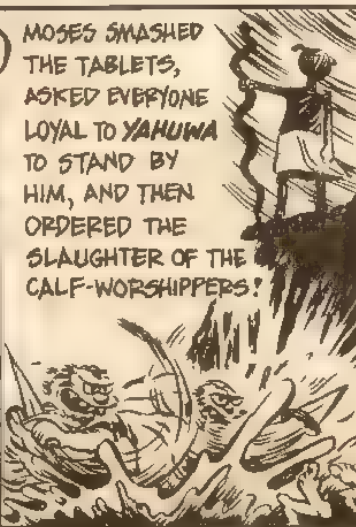
YET THEY WERE ALREADY WOR-
SHIPPING ANOTHER
GOD—A GOLDEN
CALF—BY THE
TIME HE GOT
BACK. HOW IMPRESSED
COULD THEY HAVE
BEEN?

HMM... "THOU SHALT NOT KILL?" PERHAPS I'VE BEEN HASTY...



O APIS, SAVE US FROM "MOUNTAIN MAN!"

MOSES SMASHED THE TABLETS, ASKED EVERYONE LOYAL TO YAHUWA TO STAND BY HIM, AND THEN ORDERED THE SLAUGHTER OF THE CALF-WORSHIPPERS!



NOW THEY WERE IMPRESSED!!



ON MOSES' SIDE, LET'S JUST SAY THAT HIS PEOPLE WERE IN A DESPERATE SPOT, AND HE CLEARLY SAW A NEED FOR **UNITY** AT ANY COST.

HEY...DIVISION COULD BE FATAL...EVEN **MORE** FATAL, THAT IS...



AFTER THE MASSACRE, MOSES WORKED UP A FRESH CODE OF LAWS.

GREAT FOR THE LEG MUSCLES, THIS LAWGIVING...



ON THE THEME OF UNITY WAS THE **FIRST COMMANDMENT**: ALL MUST FOLLOW YAHUWA AS THEIR FIRST—AND MAYBE EVEN THEIR **ONLY**—GOD. AND **NO IMAGES** TO CONFUSE THE ISSUE?

IT SEZ: "NO GODS BEFORE ME"—BUT WHAT ABOUT AFTER HIM, HAH?

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ABOUT IT!



GOD'S MINISTERS WOULD BE THE **LEVITES**, THOSE WHO HAD STOOD BY MOSES AGAINST THE CALF-WORSHIPERS. HIS **CHOSEN PEOPLE** WERE THE ISRAELITES; THE OTHERS AMONG THEM—ETHIOPIANS, EGYPTIANS, CANAANITES, ETC.—WERE EXCLUDED FROM THE CONGREGATION, THOUGH STILL SUBJECT TO ITS LAWS.

SLAVES OF SLAVES? HOW HUMILIATIN'!



ASIDE FROM THE USUAL LAWS AGAINST WAR AND MURDER, THERE WERE ENDLESS RULES ABOUT DIET*, THE SABBATH, AND RITUAL DETAILS.

OKAY—YOU'VE GOT THE "WAVE OFFERING" DOWN—NOW WE MOVE ON TO THE "HEAVE OFFERING..."



THE MOST SERIOUS CRIMES WERE PUNISHED BY STONING TO DEATH.

WOT DID THAT ONE DO?

ER—CRITICIZED, UM, AH, YOU-KNOW—YUWA...



LESS DANGEROUS OFFENDERS MIGHT JUST BE PUT **OUTSIDE CAMP** FOR A TIME, LIKE **MIRIAM**, WHEN SHE DENOUNCED MOSES FOR TAKING AN ETHIOPIAN WIFE...



AFTER THE EXODUS, MOSES APPARENTLY KEPT THE EGYPTIAN OBSESSION WITH **CLEANLINESS**. AMONG HIS OTHER LAWS ARE LONG LISTS OF "UNCLEAN" MEATS, BIRDS, AND SEAFOOD, WHICH THE ORTHODOX WILL NOT TOUCH TO THIS DAY.*

THOU SHALT EAT NO OWL!



THANKS, LORD!

TWO MAY HAVE PUT A CRAMP IN THE MODERN NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT.

I'LL MAKE YOU EAT CROW!

NEVER!!

YOU'LL EAT YOUR WORDS!

THE CLEAN ONES POSSIBLY

HOW ABOUT BALONEY + CHEESE?

AN ABOMINATION!

SURE WOT THEY GOT LUNCH SETTLED SOON!



SO—ON TO THE **PROMISED LAND—CANAAN**. SOME SPIES WERE SENT TO CHECK IT OUT, AND THEIR REPORT WAS MOST DISCOURAGING.

FIRST OF ALL, IT'S FULL OF PEOPLE.

AND THEY'RE ABOUT 12 FEET TALL.

TO ME THEY LOOK 14 FEET TALL!

THEY HAVE IRON CHARIOTS!

AND HUGE WALLED CITIES!

THE DEBATE WAS SHORT AND ONE-SIDED.

WITH YAHU'S HELP, WE CAN TAKE 'EM.

STONE HIM!

SO MOSES, FUMING, TOOK THEM BACK TO AN OASIS IN THE WILDERNESS, WHERE THEY REMAINED SOME **40 YEARS**, UNTIL MOST OF THE OLDER GENERATION, INCLUDING MIRIAM AND AARON, HAD DIED.

MEANWHILE, THE YOUNGSTERS, LED BY MOSES' PROTEGE **JOSHUA**, BEGAN RAIDING SOME NEIGHBORING TRIBES AND BUILDING ALLIANCES WITH OTHERS. BY MOSES' DOTAGE, THEY HAD BECOME A FEARSOME ARMY.

WITH CANAAN IN VIEW ACROSS THE JORDAN, THE AGED LEADER WENT UP FOR A FEW LAST CURSES...

"A PERVERSE AND CROOKED GENERATION... SHALL BE BURNT WITH HUNGER AND DEVoured WITH BURNING HEAT... THE SWORD WITHOUT AND TERROR WITHIN SHALL DESTROY THE YOUNG MAN AND THE VIRGIN, THE SUCKLING AND THE MAN WITH GRAY HAIR... I WILL MAKE MINE ARROWS DRUNK WITH BLOOD AND MY SWORD SHALL DEVOUR FLESH... HACK! KAF! WHEREEZE..."

WITHOUT A DOUBT, THIS MAN'S IDEAS AND PERSONALITY HAVE LEFT THEIR MARK ON HISTORY.

KOF
AATZLE
CROAK
THUD

THE HEBREWS STRUCK FIRST AT **JERICO**, AN EASY TARGET BECAUSE ITS ANCIENT WALLS WERE NEARLY RUINED AND HARDLY ANYONE WAS LIVING THERE AT THE TIME (OR SO ARCHAEOLOGISTS HAVE FOUND).

TO MANY ON BOTH SIDES, THIS VICTORY SEEMED **MIRACULOUS** ✿.

THE DAY THE SUN STANDS STILL, THAT'S THE DAY THE HEBREWS TAKE ANYTHING!

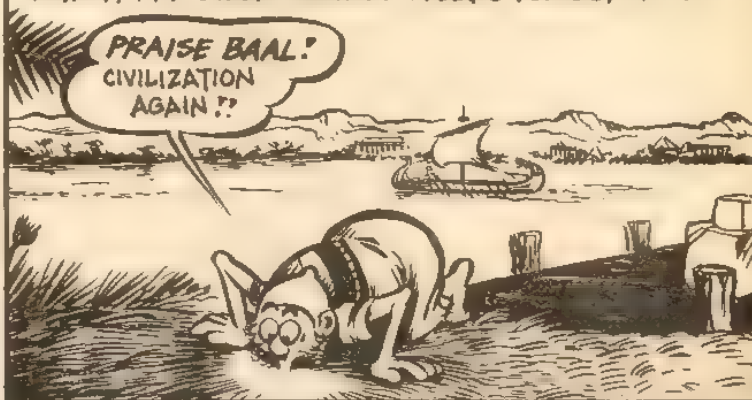
UM—I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TELL YOU THIS, SIRE...



TO MAKE A LONG STORY (THE BOOK OF JOSHUA) SHORT, THE INVADERS WENT ON TO KNOCK OVER ONE CITY AFTER ANOTHER, PUTTING MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN TO THE SWORD, AND BURNING UP AS MUCH OF CANAANITE CULTURE AS THEY COULD...

AND SO THERE WAS A **SECOND EXODUS** — OF CANAANITE ROYALTY AND OTHER FUGITIVES FLEEING FOR EGYPT ???

PRAISE BAAL! CIVILIZATION AGAIN ??



WHEN IT WAS ALL OVER, THE ISRAELITES BURIED JOSEPH'S MUMMY, DIVIDED THEMSELVES BY TRIBES, AND WENT TO LIVE IN THE EMPTY CITIES.



A FEW MODERNS, SEEING

TRUTH IN BOTH SCIENCE AND SCRIPTURE, HAVE SOUGHT TO EXPLAIN OLD TESTAMENT MIRACLES AS EVERYTHING FROM VOLCANOES AND TIDAL WAVES TO BIZARRE ASTRONOMICAL EVENTS

THE COMET VENUS SWEEP BY THIS EARTH, REVERSED OUR ROTATION, RAINED DOWN A FEW **PETRO-LEUM DEPOSITS**, AND THEN BECAME A PLANET. ✿✿



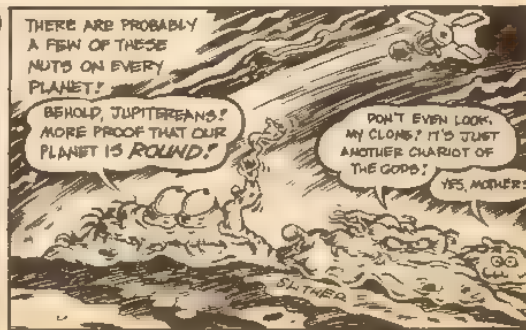
✿✿ A TINY PORTION OF THE THEORIES OF MAHMMUD YELKINSKY

THERE ARE PROBABLY A FEW OF THESE NUTS ON EVERY PLANET!

BEHOLD, JUPITEREANS! MORE PROOF THAT OUR PLANET IS **ROUND**!

DON'T EVEN LOOK, MY CLONE! IT'S JUST ANOTHER CHARIOT OF THE GODS!

YES, MOTHER!





YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED BY NOW THAT THE TIME MACHINE HAS BEEN PRETTY VAGUE ABOUT THE EXACT DATE OF THESE EVENTS? IT WOULD BE NICE IF WE COULD TIE THE EXODUS IN WITH KNOWN EGYPTIAN HISTORY, BUT THAT'S NOT SO EASY, I'M SORRY TO SAY!



THE BEST EVIDENCE, SO FAR, POSSIBLY ARE THE SO-CALLED **AMARNA LETTERS**, WRITTEN BY VARIOUS PRINCES TO THE PHARAOH AMENHOTEP III AND IV, AND UNEARTHED IN THE 1880's!

I QUOTE:



"THE KING'S WHOLE LAND, WHICH HAS BEGUN HOSTILITIES WITH ME, WILL BE LOST. BEHOLD THE TERRITORY OF SEIR AS FAR AS CARMEL! ITS PRINCES ARE WHOLLY LOST... NOW THE **HABIRI** ARE OCCUPYING THE KING'S CITIES... LET THE KING TAKE CARE OF HIS LAND...AND SEND TROOPS...IF NO TROOPS COME IN THE YEAR, THE WHOLE TERRITORY OF MY LORD THE KING WILL PERISH!"

HERE—TAKE A LETTER!



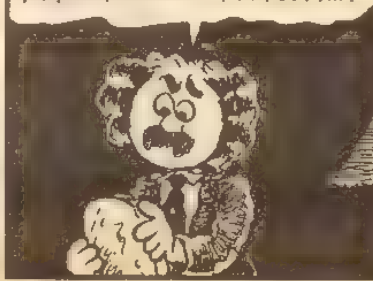
IF WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE SAME THING, THIS PUTS THE HEBREW CONQUEST IN THE REIGN OF **AMENHOTEP IV**, AROUND 1380-1360, B.C! THE EXODUS, BY THE BIBLE'S ACCOUNT, WAS SOME 40 YEARS EARLIER, SAY IN 1420 OR SO!



BUT IF YOU SAW VOL. 3, YOU'LL RECALL THAT AMENHOTEP III WAS THE SAME AS **AKHENATON**, THE HERETIC PHARAOH, WHO BELIEVED THERE WAS ONLY **ONE GOD**."



SO—IS THIS A COINCIDENCE? OR DID AKHENATON **INFLUENCE** MOSES? OR VICE VERSA? OR DID THEY "DRINK FROM THE SAME WELL?" WASN'T THE EGYPTIAN COURT OF THE TIME CRAWLING WITH FOREIGNERS AND THEIR FOREIGN IDEAS? MAYBE NEPHERTITI HERSELF...?



THEN THERE'S THE QUESTION OF HOW MUCH OF THE BIBLE ITSELF TO BELIEVE—BUT I DON'T WANT TO GET INTO THAT RIGHT NOW, **BELIEVE** ME!

ONWARD!



JUDGMENT DAYS

OF COURSE, THE ISRAELITES DIDN'T REALLY KILL **ALL** THE NATIVES, SO THEY ENDED UP LIVING AMONG MANY SURVIVING CANAANITES, JEBUSITES, HORITES, ETC., ETC... THIS CAUSED A CERTAIN **TENSION**...



ESPECIALLY SINCE THE ISRAELITES, AS FORMER OUTCASTS AND SLAVES, **REJECTED** SO MANY LOCAL INSTITUTIONS, LIKE IDOLATRY, ART, PERSONAL WEALTH, HORSES AND CHARIOTS — IN THEORY, AT LEAST. IN PRACTICE, THEY WERE NEVER 100% STRICT!



BUT THEY DEFINITELY FROWNED ON **KINGS**. WHEN ISRAEL WAS LED BY ANYONE, IT WAS SOMEONE WHO SHOWED UNCOMMON **JUDGMENT** IN A CRISIS... SO THESE LEADERS ARE CALLED THE **JUDGES**.



...LIKE **DEBORAH**, A FREE-LANCE SINGER AND PROPHET WHO USED TO HOLD COURT UNDER A PALM TREE.



WITH ISRAEL UNDER ATTACK BY THE CANAANITES, DEBORAH URGED **BARAK**, A FIGHTING MAN, TO CALL OUT THE TROOPS.



SINCE BARAK DIDN'T TRUST HIS OWN **JUDGMENT**, DEBORAH WENT ALONG AND LED THE ARMY WITH HIM.



THE DETAILS ARE LOST, BUT APPARENTLY IT RAINED AND THE CANAANITE CHARIOTS GOT STUCK IN THE MUD. AS THE ISRAELITES SWEEP OVER THEM, THE ENEMY GENERAL, **SISERA**, FLED ON FOOT.



AS HE PASSED A NOMAD'S TENT, A WOMAN BECKONED **SISERA** INSIDE.



SHE GAVE HIM SOME MILK AND SET HIM AT EASE.

MY NAME'S **JAE-EL** (=GOD-GOD)
WHAT'S YOURS?

SISERA - Z-Z-Z...

I THOUGHT
SO.

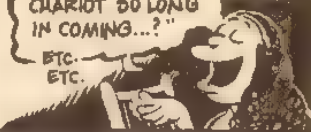


THEN SHE DROVE A TENT PEG THROUGH HIS HEAD!



THIS EPISODE IS RENDERED POETICALLY IN THE **SONG OF DEBORAH** (JUDGES 5), THOUGHT TO BE THE OLDEST PASSAGE IN THE BIBLE, AND ONE OF A FEW IN WHICH THE WOMEN ARE SOMETHING BESIDES VICTIMS OR VILLAINS.

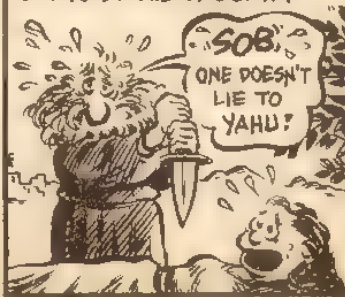
"THE MOTHER OF **SISERA** LOOKED OUT AT A WINDOW AND CRIED... "WHY IS HIS CHARIOT SO LONG IN COMING...?" ETC. ETC.



I WISH WE HAD MORE SPACE FOR THE JUDGES, LIKE **EHUD**, THE LEFT-HANDED, WHO ASSASSINATED EGLON, A MOABITE TYRANT SO FAT THAT EHUD COULDN'T PULL OUT HIS SWORD...



OR **JEPHTHAH**, WHO SWORE IF GOD GAVE HIM VICTORY, HE'D SACRIFICE **THE FIRST THING HE SAW** WHEN HE GOT HOME. TURNED OUT TO BE HIS DAUGHTER.



THERE'S NO SAYING HOW LONG THIS WILD AND PRIMITIVE STATE OF AFFAIRS MIGHT HAVE GONE ON, IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR SOME PROBLEMS OVER IN **GREECE**.



HERE COME THE PHILISTINES!

BRIEFLY, THE GREEKS SHARED IN THE GENERAL COLLAPSE OF MEDITERRANEAN CIVILIZATION WHICH TOOK PLACE IN THE 1200'S, B.C. INVADING FROM THE NORTH AND HURT BY A DROP IN TRADE, GREEK SHIPPERS TURNED TO PIRACY AND WAR, CLIMAXING WITH THE 10-YEAR *TROJAN WAR*, WHICH INVOLVED—AND RUINED—MOST OF GREECE AND ITS NEIGHBORS. WHOLE TRIBES TOOK TO THE SEA, AMONG THEM THE *PHILISTINES* (MORE DETAILS NEXT VOLUME?).



DURING THE REIGN OF RAMSES III, THE PHILISTINES ATTACKED EGYPT AND WERE REPULSED IN A SERIES OF GREAT SEA BATTLES.



THEY REBOUNDED TO THE COAST OF *CANAAN*, EVERY BIT AS DESPERATE AS ISRAEL, BUT BETTER EQUIPPED, WITH CHARIOTS AND IRON.



IMMEDIATELY THEY BEGAN TO CONQUER THE COASTAL PLAIN, MUCH TO THE ALARM OF THE NATIVES."

THEY HAVE
IRON!
IRON!

NO WONDER
THEIR CLOTHES
ARE ALWAYS
SO NEAT.



THE FIRST TIME THAT ISRAEL FOUGHT THE PHILISTINES, ISRAEL WAS ROUNDLY TROUNCED.



SO THE HEBREW ELDERS DECIDED TO BRING OUT THEIR *SECRET WEAPON*:

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT!



THE ARK OF THE COVENANT WAS ISRAEL'S MOST SACRED OBJECT. A MASSIVE, ORNATE WOODEN CHEST THAT HAD BEEN WITH JOSHUA AT JERICO, IT HELD THE LAWS OF MOSES AND MAY EVEN HAVE CARRIED JOSEPH'S MUMMY. THE TROOPS CHEERED —

YAHU!



NEVERTHELESS, WHEN THE BATTLE WAS OVER, THE PHILISTINES HAD THE ARK!

GRUNT!

BY DAGON, THAT'S HEAVY...

SLOW DOWN SLOW DOWN SLOW DOWN



THIS IS WHY "PHILISTINE" MEANS SOME-ONE TO WHOM NOTHING IS SACRED.



ANYWAY, WHEN THE PHILISTINES GOT HOME TO ASHDOD, SOME OF THEM WERE STRICKEN WITH *HEMORRHOIDS*.

SCREECH!!

YOU TOO?

I TOLD YOU THAT ARK WAS TOO HEAVY!!



THEY CONSULTED **THEIR** ELDERS.

YOU HAVE OFFENDED THEIR GOD AND THIS IS YOUR PUNISHMENT!

AND THE CURE?

SAID THE ELDERS: MAKE 5 GOLDEN HEMORRHOIDS AND 5 GOLDEN MICE (THERE WAS A PLAGUE OF MICE, TOO.) AS AN OFFERING TO THE GOD OF ISRAEL.

HOW MUCH LONGER, GOLD-SMITH?

THIS PROVES FORESIGHT IS BETTER THAN HINDSIGHT.

THESE WERE SENT BACK WITH THE ARK ON A CART DRAWN BY THE FINEST COWS.

THE OVERJOYED HEBREW PRIESTS SLAUGHTERED THE ANIMALS, BROKE THE CART INTO FIREWOOD, AND MADE A BURNT OFFERING ATOP A LARGE ROCK. ❄

THE BIBLE DOESN'T SAY IF THIS SOLVED THE PHILISTINES' PROBLEMS, BUT IT DIDN'T SOLVE ISRAEL'S. DESPITE THE RETURN OF THE ARK, ISRAEL REMAINED UNDER PHILISTINE RULE FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS, UNTIL THE EMERGENCE OF **SAMUEL**, THE LAST JUDGE AND MAKER OF KINGS...

THE RELIGIOUS PRACTICE OF **ANIMAL SACRIFICE** MAY HAVE BEGUN WHEN PRIESTS FIRST TURNED PROFESSIONAL TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE GODS, YOU BROUGHT A SHEEP TO THE PRIESTS, WHO COOKED IT AND THEN READ MESSAGES IN THE ENTRAILS.



SAMUEL'S STORY BEGAN WHEN A CHILDLESS WOMAN, **HANNAH**, WENT TO TEMPLE AND VOWED INWARDLY:

LORD, IF THOU WILT GIVE ME A MANCHILD, THEN I WILL GIVE HIM UNTO THE LORD, AND **NO RAZOR** SHALL TOUCH HIS HEAD...

MADAM, ARE YOU DRUNK?

MUTTER MUMBLE

ROCK!!
ROCK

ELI, THE PRIEST, BLESSED HANNAH; SHE WENT HOME; AND IN TIME HAD A SON, **SAMUEL**, WHOM SHE GAVE BACK TO ELI TO RAISE?

I VOWED, AND HE'S PROBABLY YOURS, ANYWAY!

GROWING TO MANHOOD IN THE TEMPLE, HANNAH'S BOY GOT A REPUTATION AS A PROPHET:

THERE'S JUST SOMETHIN' ABOUT HIM...

DOOM!

IT WAS THE SONS OF ELI WHO HAD DIED GUARDING THE ARK AGAINST THE PHILISTINES, LEAVING ONLY SAMUEL TO JUDGE ISRAEL. WHEN THE TIME WAS RIPE, 20 YEARS LATER, HE CALLED OUT THE TROOPS.

THIS TIME, THE ISRAELITES TROUNCED THE PHILISTINES. (IT PROBABLY RAINED AGAIN.)

SAMUEL BECAME ISRAEL'S LEADER, TRAVELLING FROM PLACE TO PLACE TO SIT IN JUDGMENT.

THE FIRST CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE!

IT'S A SHORT CIRCUIT

THEN, AS SAMUEL GREW OLD, SOME OF THE ELDERS APPROACHED HIM WITH A REQUEST.

SAMUEL, WE WANT A **KING**!!

THE BIBLE DOESN'T GIVE ALL THE REASONS WHY THEY WANTED A KING, BUT WE CAN GUESS.

TIMES HAVE CHANGED: WE'RE A REAL NATION NOW!

OTHER NATIONS HAVE KINGS!

WE NEED SOMEONE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THEM!

THEY THINK PROPHETS ARE TOO WEIRD!

TOO INFLEXIBLE!

TOO HAIRY!

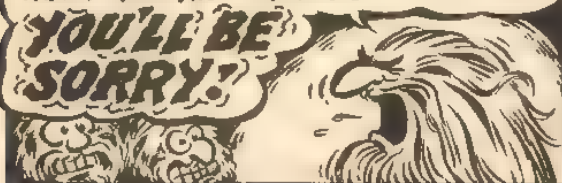
AND WE NEED A REAL ARMY TO FIGHT THOSE PHILISTINES!

WELL?

SAMUEL'S REPLY IS EXPRESSED MORE FULLY:

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ASKING FOR?
A KING WILL TAKE YOUR SHEEP—
TAKE YOUR FIELD—TAKE YOUR
SONS AND DAUGHTERS! HE'LL
KEEP HORSES AND CHARIOTS! HE'LL
MAKE YOU HIS SLAVES! I'LL DO IT—BUT

**YOU'LL BE
SORRY!**



TO SAMUEL, A KING WAS SOMEONE
BIG ENOUGH TO BEAT EVERYONE ELSE
UP—SO HE STOPPED LOOKING
WHEN HE SAW SAUL STROLLING
DOWN THE DAMASCUS ROAD.

TALL SAUL!



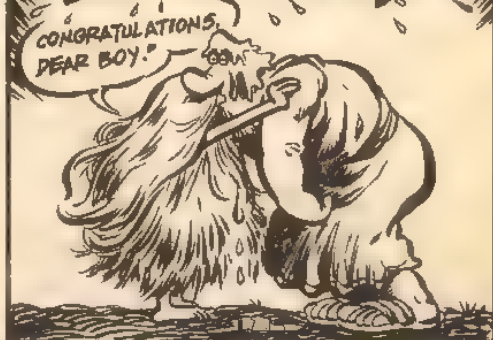
AFTER AN INTERVIEW, SAMUEL ANOINTED
SAUL WITH HOLY OIL...



...AND GAVE HIM A BIG KISS!

SMEEYOORP

CONGRATULATIONS,
DEAR BOY.



A FEW WEEKS LATER, SAUL WAS PROCLAIMED THE FIRST KING OF ISRAEL.



THE HEBREW
CUSTOM OF
POURING OIL
ON THE KING'S HEAD
IS THOUGHT TO COME
FROM AN EGYPTIAN
CEREMONY IN WHICH
A ROYAL GOVERNOR
SWORE LOYALTY TO
PHARAOH, THE
LIVING GOD.

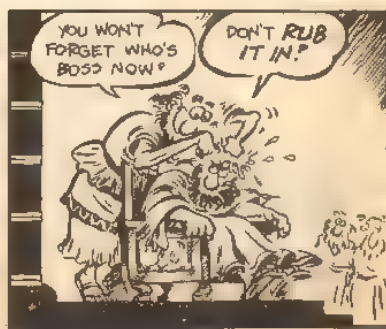
AH! PHARAOH'S OIL ON MY HEAD AND
TRICKLING OFF MY NOSE AND ALL OVER
MY NEW LOINCLOTH, WHICH I CAN
EASILY REPLACE, ON MY GOVERNOR'S
SALARY...O GLORIOUS DAY!



IN THE CASE OF
THE HEBREWS, THEN,
THE ANOINTING
DID NOT GIVE THE
KING ABSOLUTE
POWER, BUT
RATHER MEANT
THAT HE WAS
MERELY GOD'S
GOVERNOR.

YOU WON'T
FORGET WHO'S
BOSS NOW?

DON'T RUB
IT IN!



FOR HIS FIRST ACT AS KING, SAUL CUT SOME OXEN INTO LITTLE PIECES.

HE SENT THEM THROUGH-
OUT ISRAEL WITH THIS
MESSAGE:

THE TURNOUT WAS
EXCELLENT.

"WHOSOEVER COMETH
NOT FORTH AFTER SAUL
AND SAMUEL, THE SAME
SHALL BE DONE TO
HIS OXEN."

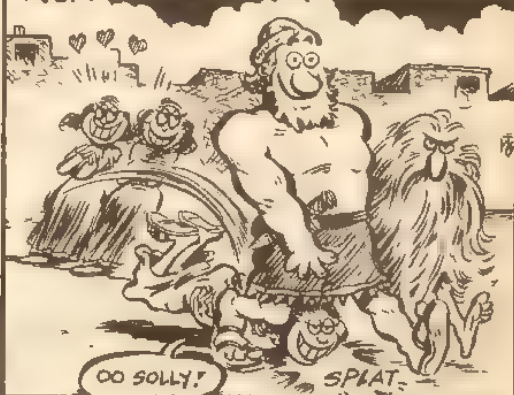


HE LED THE MEN AGAINST A BAND OF
AMMONITES WHO WERE THREATENING
TO PUT OUT THE EYES OF SOME INNOCENT
VILLAGERS.

YAHU!

DAMN! WE
NEVER GET TO
HAVE ANY FUN!

WHEN THE AMMONITES RAN WITHOUT A
FIGHT, SAUL WAS THE MAN OF THE
HOUR.



OO SO LLY!

SPLAT

FLUSHED WITH VICTORY, HE
SENT HIS SON JONATHAN
TO ATTACK A PHILISTINE
GARRISON. IN RETALIATION,
THE REST OF THE PHILIS-
TINES TURNED OUT IN
FORCE...

AND THE ISRAELITES TURNED **AROUND** IN FORCE !!

ULP!

SORRY, O MAN OF
THE HOUR!

BUT YOUR
HOUR'S UP?

TO THE
HILLS?

AS IF THINGS WEREN'T BAD ENOUGH,
SAMUEL REALLY LET HIM HAVE IT.



SAUL SANK INTO MELANCHOLY AND
BEGAN TO ACT STRANGE.

YUGGA YUGGA TWEET
TWEET HEY HEY



THEN HE RAIDED THE **AMALEKITES** FOR
BOOTY. THIS WENT AGAINST HOLY WRIT."

LOOK-AMALEKITES
TO BE DESTROYED-
NOT ROBBED."

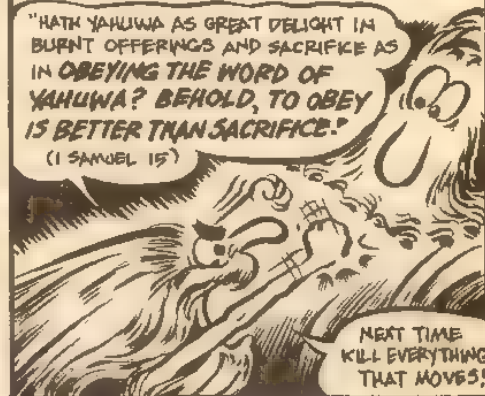
BUT I OFFERED
TH' USUAL SACRI-
FICES...



FROM THIS EPISODE COMES AN EARLY
STATEMENT THAT **MORALITY** IS
SUPERIOR TO **RITUAL**:

"HATH YAHUWA AS GREAT DELIGHT IN
BURNT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICE AS
IN OBEYING THE WORD OF
YAHUWA? BEHOLD, TO OBEY
IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE."

(1 SAMUEL 15)



TO ILLUSTRATE THE POINT,
SAMUEL TOOK **AGAG**, THE
CAPTIVE AMALEKITE KING,
AND "HEWED HIM IN PIECES."

LIKE THIS?

AND THIS?

AND
THIS
AND
THIS.

CHOP
WACK
CUT



THIS DROVE SAUL INTO SUCH DEEP GLOOM THAT
HIS FRIENDS HIRED A SINGER TO TRY AND CHEER
HIM UP, A YOUNG MAN NAMED **DAVID**..



SO THAT WAS THE SITUATION WHEN THE PHILISTINES NEXT CAME OUT FOR BATTLE. IN THE BEST GREEK TRADITION, THEIR HUGEST HERO, **GOLIATH**, PARADED UP AND DOWN BETWEEN THE LINES WITH HIS SHIELD-BEARER.



ISRAEL'S HUGEST WAS **SAUL**, BUT HE HUNG BACK. INSTEAD, HIS **SINGER** VOLUNTEERED?



WE ALL KNOW HOW DAVID FACED GOLIATH WITHOUT ARMOR...



HOW, USING HIS DEADLY SKILL WITH THE SLING,



HE SMACKED GOLIATH A MIGHTY **SMACK**, SMACK BETWEEN THE EYES?



HOW, AS GOLIATH WRITHED IN PAIN...



DAVID CUT OFF THE PHILISTINE'S HEAD WITH HIS OWN SWORD?



GOLIATH WAS SURVIVED BY FOUR OVERSIZED SONS, **ISHBI-BENOB**, **SAPH**, **GOLIATH, JR.**, AND AN UNNAMED GIANT WITH 6 FINGERS ON EACH HAND. THEY ALL GREW UP TO BECOME PHILISTINE WARRIORS, BUT WHAT BECAME OF GOLIATH'S SHIELD-BEARER WE'LL NEVER KNOW...



AFTER THE BATTLE, A NEW POPULAR SONG
GOT SAUL'S GALL...

SAUL HAS
KILLED HIS
THOUSANDS...

...AND DAVID HAS
KILLED HIS TEN
THOUSANDS...



THE MOODY MONARCH BEGAN TO
THINK ABOUT GETTING RID OF
THE KID — SO WHEN THE PRIN-
CESS MICHAL ASKED TO
MARRY DAVID, SAUL SAID YES...

O THANK YOU,
FATHER.



...ON ONE IMPOSSIBLE CONDITION—
HE THOUGHT.?"

SHE'S YOURS — IF YOU BRING
ME 100 FORESKINS OF
THE PHILISTINES.?"

NO PROBLEM!

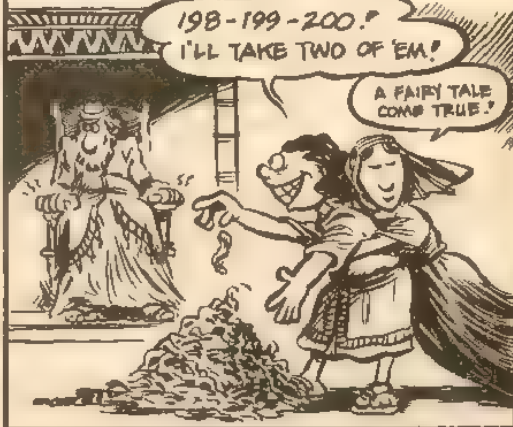


NATURALLY, DAVID WON THE PRINCESS.?"

198-199-200.?"

I'LL TAKE TWO OF 'EM!

A FAIRY TALE
COMES TRUE.?"



ONE DAY, AS SAUL WAS PLAYFULLY
JABBING A JAVELIN AT DAVID, HE
SUDDENLY LET FLY!



WITH THE AID OF MICHAL AND JONA-
THAN, DAVID FLED IN THE NIGHT.

I'D SAY YER FATHER
HAS TROUBLE WITH LONG-
TERM RELATIONSHIPS.?"



WHEN JONATHAN TOLD HIS FATHER THAT DAVID WAS GONE, SAUL TRIED TO RUN HIM THROUGH!

MY SON THE PERVERT!



BUT DAVID WAS GONE—TO THE HILLS, WHERE HE WAS JOINED BY FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND THE POOR AND OPPRESSED. THESE BECAME KNOWN AS DAVID'S **MIGHTY MEN**, ESPECIALLY THE FEROCIOUS **JOAB**, DAVID'S RIGHT-HAND MIGHTY MAN.

I'M LIKE LITTLE JOHN TO YOUR ROBIN HOOD?

I HAVEN'T THE FAINTEST IDEA WHAT YOU'RE BABBLING ABOUT, BUT I'M SURE YOU'RE RIGHT, JOAB, OLD BOY!



SEVERAL TIMES SAUL TRIED TO CATCH HIM, BUT DAVID ALWAYS GAVE HIM THE SLIP.

SAUL SAID:

ISN'T ANYBODY SORRY FOR ME? BLUBBER!



THEN HE GOT WORD THE MIGHTY MEN HAD GONE OVER TO THE PHILISTINES!



HE WANTED **SAMUEL'S** ADVICE—BUT SAMUEL WAS DEAD—SO SAUL WENT TO A WITCH, WHO CALLED UP HIS **GHOST**.

I'LL BE SEEING YOU SOON ENOUGH—NOW GO AWAY!



WITHIN DAYS, SAUL AND JONATHAN WERE KILLED IN BATTLE WITH THE PHILISTINES.

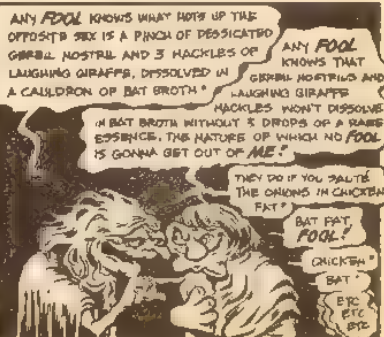


ALTHOUGH THE BIBLICAL KING SAUL ONCE CONSULTED A **WITCH**, THE PRACTICE OF WITCHCRAFT WAS FROWNED ON IN ANCIENT ISRAEL. SAUL HIMSELF, IN ONE OF THOSE PERIODIC DRIVES TO PURIFY RELIGION, HAD ONCE SUPPRESSED THE USE OF "FAMILIAR SPIRITS."



WE'VE DECIDED TO ELIMINATE ALL OTHER GODS AGAIN, SO I'M AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO CONFISCATE YOUR CAT?

BECAUSE THE BIBLE IS MUM ON THE RITUALS OF RIVAL CULTS, WE MAY NEVER KNOW EXACTLY HOW ANCIENT WITCHCRAFT WORKED. IF IT WAS ANYTHING LIKE OTHER RELIGIONS, THOUGH, THE WITCHES THEMSELVES WOULD HAVE AGREED.



ANY **FOOL** KNOWS WHAT HOT'S UP THE OPPOSITE SEX IS A PINCH OF DEDICATED GIBBIL NOSTRIL AND 3 HACKLES OF LAUGHING GIRAFFES, DISSOLVED IN A CAULDRON OF BAT BROTH.

ANY **FOOL** KNOWS THAT GIBBIL NOSTRILS AND LAUGHING GIRAFFES WON'T DISSOLVE IN BAT BROTH WITHOUT 2 DROPS OF A RARE ESSENCE, THE NATURE OF WHICH NO **FOOL** IS GONNA GET OUT OF ME!

THEY DO IF YOU SALT THE ONIONS IN CHICKEN FAT?

BAT FAT! **FOOL!** CHICKEN! BAT! ETC. ETC. ETC.

NOW DAVID LED THE MIGHTY MEN TO **HEBRON**, WHERE THE TRIBE OF **JUDAH** CROWNED HIM KING. THE REST OF ISRAEL FOLLOWED **ISHBAAL**, A SON OF SAUL. THIS SPLIT WAS A TASTE OF THINGS TO COME.



FOR TWO YEARS THE RIVALS BATTLED, AND BIT BY BIT THE MIGHTY MEN GOT THE UPPER HAND. FINALLY, **ISHBAAL** WAS ASSASSINATED IN BED.



THE KILLERS BROUGHT HIS HEAD TO DAVID.



TO THEIR SHOCK, HE ORDERED THEM EXECUTED AND THEIR HANDS AND FEET CUT OFF AND HUNG UP!

WE DON'T GO MURDERING KINGS IN THEIR BEDS!

WAGGLE



AND SO, AT AGE 30 (OR SO) DAVID BECAME KING OF ISRAEL.



FOR HIS CAPITAL, DAVID CHOSE **JERUSALEM**, A HILL TOWN OCCUPIED SINCE 1800, B.C., BY THE JEBUSITES, A PEOPLE WHOM ISRAEL HAD NEVER MANAGED TO CONQUER. IMPRESSED BY ITS STRONG POSITION, DAVID LED AN ARMY AGAINST JERUSALEM AND TOOK THE CITY.



THEN HE DANCED HALF-NAKED THROUGH THE STREETS, SINGING HYMNS OF VICTORY.



DAVID, SUPERSTAR

AFTER THE PARADE, MICHAL GAVE DAVID THE BUSINESS.



WELL, SHE HAD REASON TO BE UPSET: HER FATHER AND TWO BROTHERS WERE DEAD, AND DAVID HAD TAKEN A COUPLE OF OTHER WIVES TOO - BUT AFTER THIS SPAT, HE NEVER TOUCHED HER AGAIN!

THAT TEMPER REMINDS ME OF HER **** FATHER?!"



SOMETIME LATER, HE WAS TAKING THE AIR ON THE PALACE ROOF, WHEN HE SPOTTED THE BATHING BATHSHEBA.



ALTHOUGH SHE WAS MARRIED - TO **URIAH THE HITTITE**, ONE OF THE MIGHTY MEN - DAVID INVITED BATHSHEBA IN FOR A VISIT.

SURPRISED?

NOT EXACTLY... I'VE BEEN STANDING NAKED IN FRONT OF THAT WINDOW FOR 3 WEEKS NOW...



NOW BATHSHEBA GOT PREGNANT, SO DAVID DID WHAT ANY KING WOULD DO UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES...



HE CALLED **URIAH** HOME FROM THE WARS...

MY DEAR FELLOW - I'VE HEARD SO MUCH ABOUT YOU?

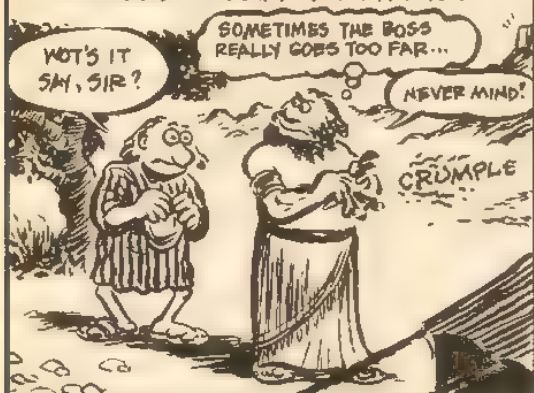


AND GAVE HIM A LETTER TO TAKE BACK TO GENERAL JOAB.

NO PEEKIN' NOW!



THE LETTER (WRITTEN, I SUPPOSE, IN ALPHABETIC SCRIPT ✻) SAID, IN EFFECT, "TAKE CARE OF URIAH THE HITTITE."



SO JOAB SENT URIAH, WITH A CONTINGENT OF MEN, TOO CLOSE TO THE WALLS OF THE CITY THEY WERE BESEIGING.



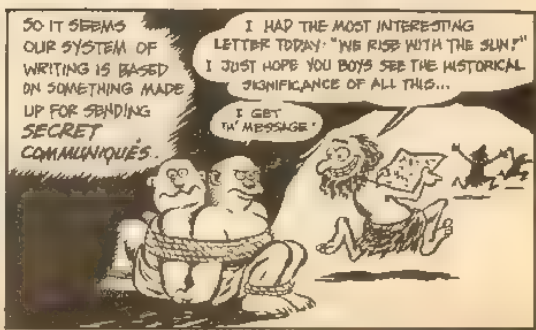
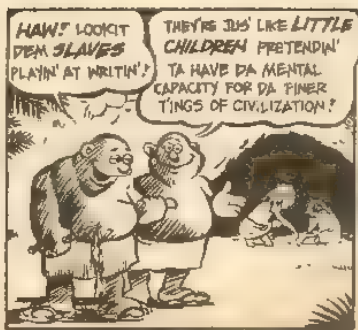
NATURALLY, THE DEFENDERS WERE ABLE TO PICK OFF SEVERAL OF THEM, INCLUDING URIAH.



AFTER A PROPER PERIOD OF MOURNING, DAVID MARRIED BATHSHEBA, BUT THEIR BABY DIED — GOD'S PUNISHMENT, IT WAS SAID. STILL, THEY TRIED AGAIN, AND THE SECOND EFFORT WORKED: A SON THEY NAMED SOLOMON.



THE ALPHABET WAS INVENTED AT LEAST TWICE IN ANCIENT CANAAN, BUT ALL VERSIONS DIED OUT EXCEPT FOR THE ONE DEvised BY SEMITIC COPPER MINERS IN THE SINAI. THIS 22-CHARACTER SCRIPT, BASED ON EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHS, IS THE ANCESTOR OF ALL MODERN ALPHABETS.



IN SOLOMON'S BOYHOOD, THE COURT OF ISRAEL GREW RICH, AS DAVID'S ARMIES PUT DOWN THE PHILISTINES AND FORCED TRIBUTE FROM ALL THE NEIGHBORING KINGDOMS. THUS, UNLIKE HIS FATHER, SOLOMON GREW UP AMIDST WEALTH, POWER, DIPLOMACY, AND *PALACE INTRIGUE*.

HE SAW HIS HALF-SISTER *TAMAR* RAPED BY HIS HALF-BROTHER *AMNON*.



HE SAW ANOTHER HALF-BROTHER, *ABSALOM*, AVENGE THE CRIME BY MURDERING *AMNON*.



A FEW YEARS LATER, HE SAW THE SAME *ABSALOM* LEAD A REBELLION AGAINST *DAVID*.



HE SAW HOW *DAVID*'S MIGHTY MEN PUT DOWN THE REVOLT, AND HOW THE FLEEING *ABSALOM* GOT HIS HEAD CAUGHT IN A TREE...



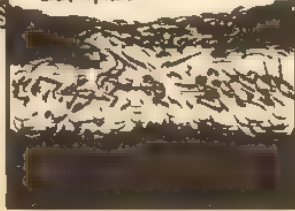
...AND HOW GENERAL *JOAB* PERSONALLY HELPED CUT HIM TO BITS?



HE SAW KING *DAVID* MOURN FOR HIS SON, AND *JOAB*'S ANGER.



HE SAW THE REVOLT *SPLIT THE KINGDOM* AGAIN, WITH THE TRIBES OF *JUDAH* AND *BENJAMIN* FOLLOWING *DAVID* AND THE REST LOYAL TO THE HOUSE OF *SAUL*, JUST AS BEFORE.



DAVID SPENT HIS OLD AGE FIGHTING TO HOLD HIS KINGDOM TOGETHER. EVEN THE *PHILISTINES* ROSE AGAIN?



ALL THIS *SOLOMON* SAW...

AS DAVID LAY DYING, RACKED BY CHILLS, HIS ADVISERS TRIED TO WARM HIM UP WITH THE BEAUTY ABISHAG, AND HIS SONS BEGAN EYING THE THRONE...



I DON'T GET IT. THIS NEVER FAILED BEFORE.

ONE, ADONIJAH ("LORD JAH") STAGED HIS OWN CORONATION WITHOUT INVITING SOLOMON.



MEANWHILE, BATHSHEBA BEGGED THE DYING KING TO FAVOR HER SON.



AS YOU VALUE MY LIFE, LORD?

GURGLING

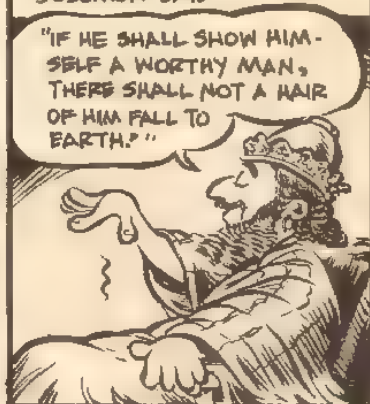
HE SAYS "YES."

CLAIMING DAVID'S BLESSING, THE PRIESTS, PROPHETS, AND MIGHTY MEN PROCLAIMED SOLOMON KING AND HELD A HUGE PARADE. AT THE SIGHT, ADONIJAH'S FRIENDS TURNED TAIL!



I'LL TAKE THAT.

ADONIJAH ENDED UP BEGGING FOR MERCY, AND SOLOMON SAID:



"IF HE SHALL SHOW HIMSELF A WORTHY MAN, THERE SHALL NOT A HAIR OF HIM FALL TO EARTH."

BUT AS SOON AS DAVID DIED, SOLOMON FOUND AN EXCUSE TO PUT HIS RIVAL TO DEATH.



HE ASKED FOR ABISHAG — MIGHT AS WELL HAVE ASKED FOR THE KINGDOM.

ADONIJAH'S FRIENDS, TOO, WERE OFFED, INCLUDING OLD GENERAL JOAB, AS HE CLUNG TO THE TABERNACLE ALTAR.

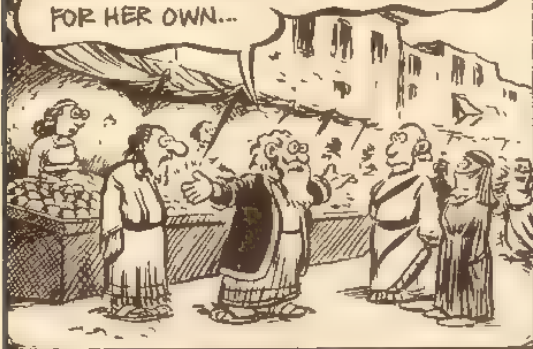


GIVE UP?

POKE

THEN SOLOMON SPREAD THE STORY OF THE **TWO WOMEN**:

TWO WOMEN CAME TO MY LORD SOLOMON WITH A BABY, AND EACH CLAIMED IT FOR HER OWN...



MY LORD SAID: "BRING ME A SWORD," AND A SWORD WAS BROUGHT. AND HE SAID, "CUT THE LIVING CHILD IN TWO AND GIVE HALF TO ONE AND HALF TO THE OTHER."



THE FIRST WOMAN SAID: "O MY LORD, GIVE HER THE LIVING CHILD, AND IN NO WISE SLAY IT," BUT THE OTHER SAID, "LET IT BE NEITHER MINE NOR THINE, BUT DIVIDE IT." MY LORD SOLOMON SAID, "DO NOT DIVIDE THE CHILD, BUT GIVE IT TO THE FIRST WOMAN, FOR SHE IS THE MOTHER."



IN OTHER WORDS:

ANYONE WANNA **DIVIDE THE KINGDOM**? LET'S DIVIDE THE KINGDOM — BUT REMEMBER — **SOLOMON HAS THE SWORDS!!**



NO WONDER THEY CALLED HIM WISE!

SO SOLOMON BECAME ISRAEL'S MOST POWERFUL KING; AND JUST AS SAMUEL HAD FORESEEN, HE LAID HEAVY TAXES, BEEFED UP THE CHARIOTRY, TOOK HUNDREDS OF WIVES, AND WORSHIPPED ALIEN GODS?



A FEW PROPHETS DENOUNCED HIS RULE, BUT NOTHING CAME OF IT — FOR THE TIME BEING...

ARISE, ARISE, JEROBOAM!

HSST —
PSST??

ER-AH — JUST SUGGESTING AN EGYPTIAN HOLIDAY FOR THE YOUNG MAN...



THEN THERE WERE SOLOMON'S BUILDING PROJECTS. HE MADE A DEAL WITH **HIRAM**, KING OF THE SOPHISTICATED SEAPORT OF **TYRE**.

YOU HIRAM?

AND I FIRE 'EM! NO HO."

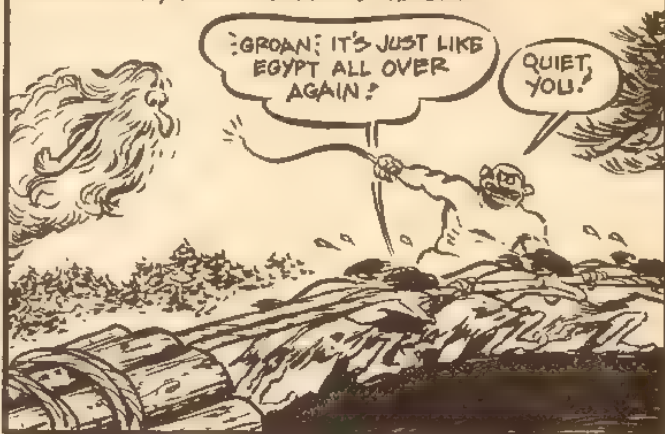
DID SOMEONE SAY "SOPHISTICATED?"



SOLOMON SUPPLIED GANGS OF LABORERS, 10,000 AT A TIME, TO CUT HIRAM'S TIMBER.

GROAN! IT'S JUST LIKE EGYPT ALL OVER AGAIN!

QUIET, YOU!



HIRAM SUPPLIED TYRIAN SHIPS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, METALWORKERS, IVORY-CARVERS, ETC. (WE'LL MEET THESE TYRIAN EXPERTS AGAIN AND AGAIN, WORKING FOR NATIONS WITH LESS KNOW-HOW THAN THEMSELVES.✿)



ONE MEASURE OF THE SCIENTIFIC ABILITY OF ANCIENT PEOPLES IS HOW ACCURATELY THEY COMPUTED THE VALUE OF "**PI**," THE RATIO OF A CIRCLE'S CIRCUMFERENCE TO ITS DIAMETER, OR 3.14159. THE EGYPTIANS HAD IT AT $\frac{256}{81}$, OR 3.16049, AND THE BABYLONIANS USED $\frac{25}{8} = 3.125$.

THE BABYLONIANS IN PARTICULAR WERE A WHIZ WITH THEORETICAL MATH

SUBTRACT 32 SHEKEL WEIGHT, ADD 3360 AND WE SEE YOU OWE ME EXACTLY 32 SHEKEL."

ER - CAN YOU BREAK A RAM?



THE BIBLE, WRITTEN DURING A SLUMP IN EGYPTIAN AND BABYLONIAN CIVILIZATION, MENTIONS A GIANT ROUND CAULD RON AT SOLOMON'S TEMPLE, 30 CUBITS AROUND AND 10 CUBITS ACROSS - GIVING THE BIBLICAL VALUE FOR **PI** AT EXACTLY 3.

HEY - THAT'S WHY I HAD IT BUILT BY OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS!

THE WISEST MOVE - AS ALWAYS, SIRE??



THE RESULT WAS A LARGE PALACE FOR SOLOMON AND A SOMEWHAT SMALLER TEMPLE FOR YAHUWA. (SOLOMON'S HAREM WAS BIGGER.) IN THESE SPLENDID DIGS, THE KING LIVED OUT HIS REIGN IN PEACE, RECEIVING FOREIGN DIGNITARIES AND DROPPING THE LITTLE BITS OF WISDOM THAT MADE HIM FAMOUS."

"THE WISDOM OF THE PRUDENT
IS TO UNDERSTAND HIS WAY:
BUT THE POLLY OF FOOLS IS
DECEIT..." HMM... TRY AGAIN...

"THE CROWN OF THE WISE
IS THEIR RICHES: BUT THE
FOOLISHNESS OF FOOLS IS
THEIR FOLLY... HEH HEH...

"THE TONGUE OF THE WISE USETH
KNOWLEDGE ARIGHT, BUT THE
MOUTH OF FOOLS POURETH OUT
FOOLISHNESS..."

HEY, I GOT A
MILLION OF 'EM?

EVER THINK OF
CUTTIN' IT DOWN
TO TEN, SOL?



SPLIT KINGDOM

DURING SOLOMON'S REIGN, PROTEST WAS MUTED, BUT AFTER HIS DEATH, PLENTY OF DISGRUNTLED SUBJECTS CAME TO THE CORONATION OF HIS SON REHOBOAM.



THEIR SPOKESMAN, JEROBOAM, WHO HAD COME OUT OF HIDING IN EGYPT, CONFRONTED THE NEW KING.

I'LL GET TO THE POINT:
ARE YOU GONNA BE
AN IMPROVEMENT
ON YOUR FATHER?



AFTER CHECKING WITH HIS ADVISERS, REHOBOAM GAVE THIS MEMORABLE ANSWER:

MY FATHER CHASTISED
YOU WITH WHIPS...



I SHALL CHASTISE YOU
WITH SCORPIONS!?

KITCHY KITCHY
KITCHY



TO WHICH JEROBOAM MADE AN EQUALLY MEMORABLE REPLY:

TO YOUR TENTS,
O ISRAEL!?



AT FIRST, REHOBOAM DIDN'T TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY, BUT WHEN THEY STONED HIS CHIEF TAX COLLECTOR TO DEATH, HE RETURNED TO JERUSALEM IN A HURRY.



ONCE AGAIN THE KINGDOM WAS SPLIT, THIS TIME FOR GOOD. REHOBOAM RULED THE LITTLE REALM OF **JUDAH** FROM JERUSALEM, AND JEROBOAM RULED THE REST OF ISRAEL.



MANY FRIENDS OF SOLOMON HAD TO FLEE ISRAEL FOR JUDAH, ESPECIALLY THE **PRIESTS**.



AS A RESULT, JUDAH BECAME THE CENTER OF THE RELIGION WHICH NATURALLY CAME TO BE KNOWN AS **JUDAISM**. WHAT HAPPENED IN ISRAEL WE'LL BE SEEING SHORTLY...



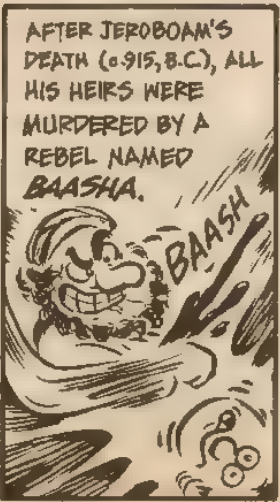
MEANWHILE, **EGYPT**, WHICH WAS MAKING A COMEBACK, TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE SPLIT TO ATTACK JUDAH, ITS NEAREST NEIGHBOR.



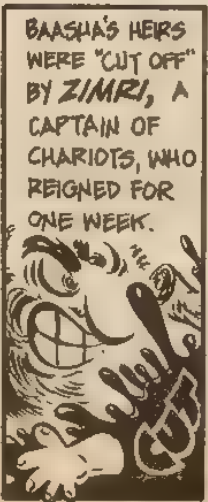
REHOBOAM WISELY SUBMITTED, AND PHARAOH CARRIED OFF SOLOMON'S FABULOUS WEALTH.



THOUGH POOR, JUDAH DID FAIRLY WELL UNDER EGYPTIAN PROTECTION, AND THE HOUSE OF DAVID RULED WITHOUT INTERRUPTION; BUT IN ISRAEL THINGS WENT LESS SMOOTHLY...



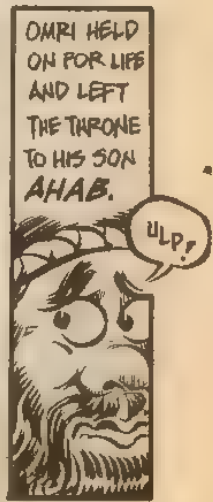
AFTER JEROBOAM'S DEATH (c.915 B.C.), ALL HIS HEIRS WERE MURDERED BY A REBEL NAMED **BAASHA**.



BAASHA'S HEIRS WERE "CUT OFF" BY **ZIMRI**, A CAPTAIN OF CHARIOTS, WHO REIGNED FOR ONE WEEK.



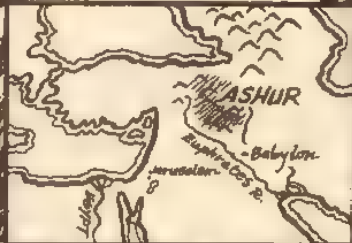
ZIMRI WAS TOPPLED BY **OMRI** AND BURNT IN THE PALACE.



OMRI HELD ON FOR LIFE AND LEFT THE THRONE TO HIS SON **AHAB**.

ASSYRIA RISING

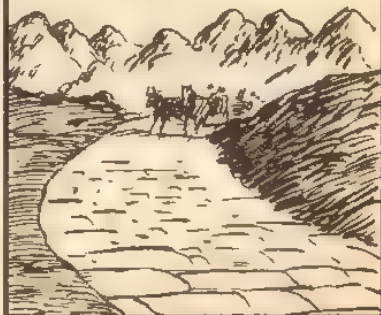
MEANWHILE, BEYOND THE EUPHRATES RIVER, FROM THE HILLS NORTH OF BABYLON, THE KINGS OF **ASHUR** HAD BEGUN THE CONQUESTS WHICH WOULD BUILD THE **ASSYRIAN EMPIRE**.



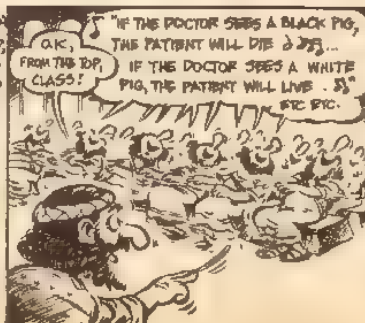
THE ASSYRIANS INHERITED THE RELIGION, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE OF SUMER AND BABYLON; AND THEY ADDED SOME WACKY IDEAS OF THEIR OWN. 🌀



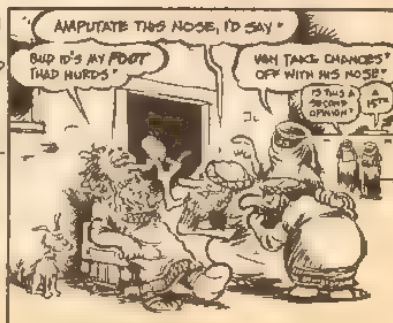
THEY WERE EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATORS, MAINTAINING A SYSTEM OF MESSENGERS AND ROADS WHICH **PAVED** THE WAY FOR FURTHER CONQUESTS.



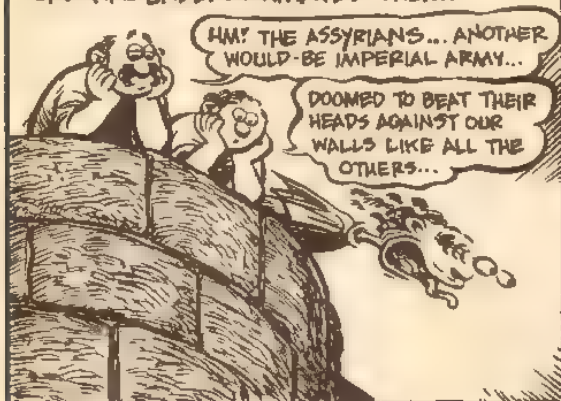
🌀 THE ASSYRIAN PRIESTHOOD, ADDICTED TO MUMBO-JUMBO, HAD LET THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE SLIDE FROM A REASONABLY HIGH LEVEL INTO A MESS OF MAGIC SPELLS AND INCANTATIONS. ONE WONDER WHAT THEIR **MEDICAL SCHOOLS** WERE LIKE...



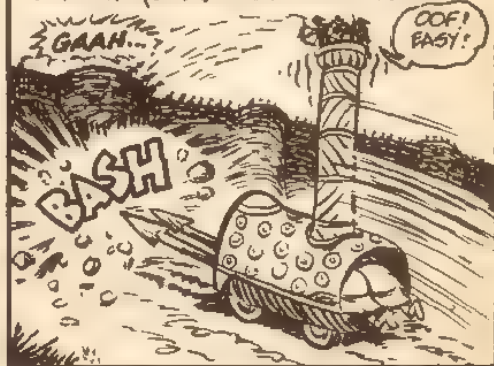
THIS MAY EXPLAIN WHY A SICK ASSYRIAN, INSTEAD OF CONSULTING A DOCTOR, WOULD USUALLY JUST SIT OUTSIDE HIS DOORWAY AND TAKE ADVICE FROM ANYONE WHO CARED TO GIVE IT.



BUT WHERE THE ASSYRIANS REALLY EXCELLED WAS AT **WAR**, AND WOE TO ANYONE WHO UNDERESTIMATED THEM!



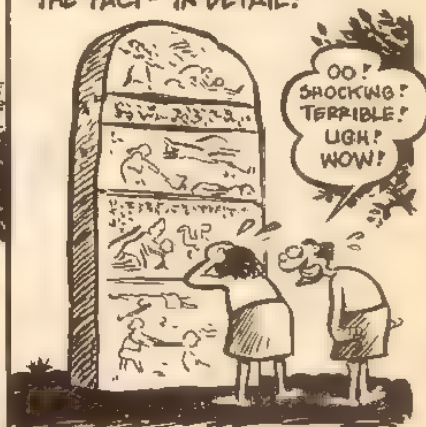
THEY PERFECTED THE USE OF **ARMORED BATTERING RAMS**, **SEIGE TOWERS**, AND OTHER DEVICES FOR CONQUERING WALLED CITIES.



THEN, AFTER A VICTORY, THE ASSYRIANS SYSTEMATICALLY **BURNT, FLAYED, TORTURED, BEHEADED, MUTILATED, IMPALED, AND HEAPED UP THE HEADS** OF THE VANQUISHED.



THEN THEY ADVERTISED THE FACT - IN DETAIL!



IT MUST HAVE BEEN HARD BEING KING OF ASSYRIA!

O DEAR! NOT SHALL IT BE TODAY? FLAY, FLOG, MUTILATE, IMPALE, OR PUT THEM ON LEASHES IN DOCKHOUSES? SIGH:



WITH ASSYRIA RISING IN THE EAST, THE KINGS OF JUDAH, ISRAEL, DAMASCUS, TYRE, MOAB, ETC., ETC., SUDDENLY PUT ASIDE THEIR DIFFERENCES!



THIS COALITION WAS ABLE TO HOLD OFF THE ASSYRIANS TEMPORARILY IN A BATTLE ON THE KARKAR RIVER, 853, B.C.



BUT THE INDIRECT COST TO ISRAEL WAS TREMENDOUS.

25 YEARS EARLIER, KING AHAB CEMENTED ONE ALLIANCE BY MARRYING JEZEBEL, A PRINCESS OF TYRE.

A DALLIANCE FOR THE ALLIANCE, DEAR?

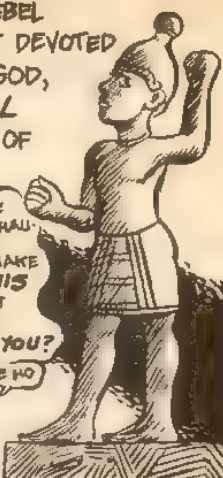
HEE HO HURK



NOW JEZEBEL WAS MOST DEVOTED TO HER GOD, THE BAAL (= "LORD") OF TYRE.

HONEY, YOU'RE NOT A MALE CHAUVINIST SWINE WHO WOULD MAKE ME WORSHIP HIS GOD WITHOUT WORSHIPPING MINE--ARE YOU?

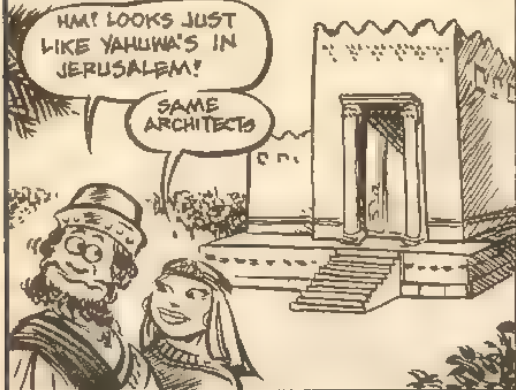
HEE HO



AHAB, AN ACCOMMODATING SORT, BUILT A TEMPLE TO THE GOD IN SAMARIA, HIS CAPITAL.

WHAT LOOKS JUST LIKE YAHUWA'S IN JERUSALEM!

SAME ARCHITECTS



BAAL AND JEZEBEL WERE DENOUNCED BY THE NATIVE PROPHETS, ESPECIALLY ELIJAH THE TISHBITE, WHO PROPHESIED DIRE TIMES!

AS THE GOD OF ISRAEL LIVETH, THERE SHALL BE NO RAIN FOR THREE YEARS!

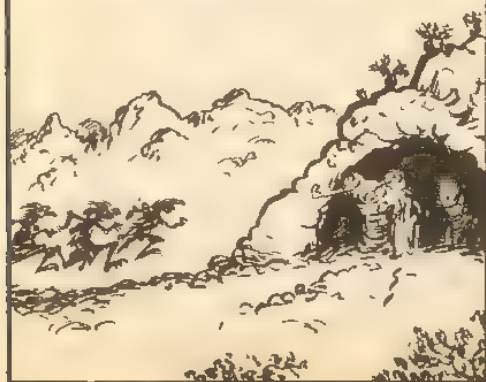
BAAL

BAAL

BAAL



WHEN THE RAINS STOPPED, JEZEBEL BLAMED THE PROPHETS OF YAHUWA, AND INTO THE DESERT THEY WENT.



AS THE DROUGHT LENGTHENED, SO DID ELIJAH'S REPUTATION. IT WAS SAID HE WAS FED BY CROWS AND COULD RESURRECT THE DEAD.

ACTUALLY, HE FEEDS US-- BUT DON'T TELL ANYONE!

HELLO



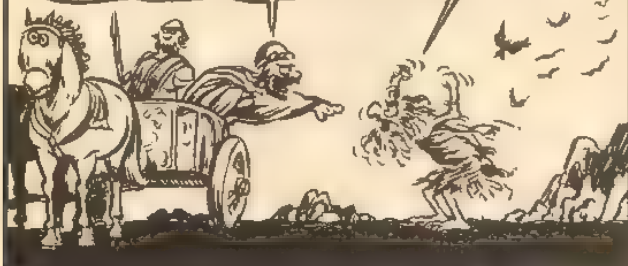
UP AGAINST THE BAAL

HE CHALLENGED THE
PROPHETS OF BAAL TO A DUEL.

AFTER THREE YEARS' DROUGHT, AHAB WAS OUT LOOK-
ING FOR WATER, WHEN ELIJAH SUDDENLY APPEARED.

AREN'T YOU THE ONE
RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS
*0*0* DRY SPELL?

NO—AND I'LL
PROVE IT!



I'LL TAKE ON 450
OF 'EM! AND BRING
YOUR FRIENDS!?



BEFORE A LARGE CROWD
TWO ALTARS WERE BUILT,
FIREWOOD ADDED, AND
TWO SLAUGHTERED BULLS
LAID ON. ELIJAH SAID:

"CALL YE ON THE NAME OF
YOUR GOD, AND I WILL CALL
ON THE NAME OF YAHUWA,
AND THE GOD THAT ANSWERS
BY FIRE, LET HIM BE GOD!"



ALL MORNING THE PROPHETS
OF BAAL PRAYED FOR
FIRE.



THEY SCREAMED; THEY HOWLED,
THEY SLASHED THEMSELVES
WITH KNIVES, BUT NOTHING
WORKED.

AND YOUR WOOD
IS DRY AS KINDER!
TOK!

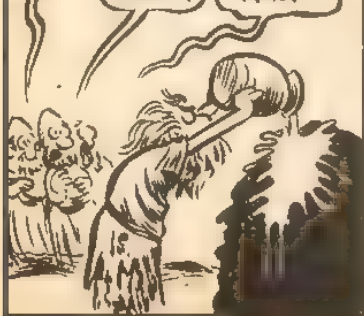


WHEN ELIJAH'S TURN CAME,
HE DID SOMETHING ODD:
HE'S POURING WATER ON IT!
WHERE DID HE GET WATER?

WATER?

GULP?

WATER...

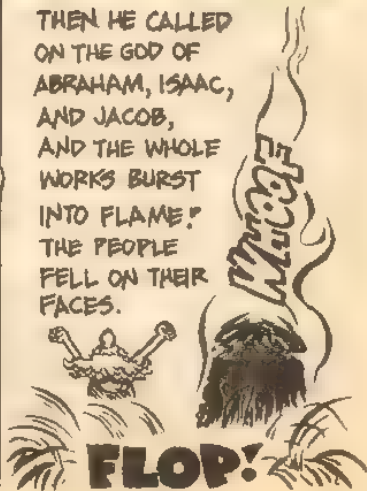


THREE TIMES ELIJAH
EMPTIED HIS BUCKET,
UNTIL EVERYTHING
WAS SOPPING.

WHAT A
DREADFUL, DREADFUL
WASTE!



THEN HE CALLED
ON THE GOD OF
ABRAHAM, ISAAC,
AND JACOB,
AND THE WHOLE
WORKS BURST
INTO FLAME!
THE PEOPLE
FELL ON THEIR
FACES.



FLOP!

EVER SINCE, SKEPTICS HAVE WONDERED IF IT WAS REALLY WATER ELIJAH POURED — BUT AT THE TIME THERE WERE PLENTY OF BELIEVERS.* ELIJAH ORDERED THEM TO SEIZE THE PRIESTS OF BAAL...



WAIT... DIDN'T YOU SEE HIM FUMBLING AROUND UP HIS SLEEVE?... AND WHERE DID HE GET WATER? STOP... THINK...

BEFORE AHAB'S HORRIFIED GAZE, JEZEBEL'S FRIENDS WERE PUT TO THE SWORD.*



BY WHICHEVER GOD — WHAT AM I GONNA TELL THE WIFE?

BUT CUT MANGLE SHRIEK

AS THE RAINS BEGAN, ELIJAH "WENT FOR HIS LIFE."

HE DID WHAT?!



THINKING HE WAS AS GOOD AS DEAD, HE PASSED HIS MANTLE TO **ELISHA**, WHOM HE FOUND PLOWING A FIELD.

HERE — MAYBE THE SIMILARITY OF NAMES WILL CONFUSE 'EM...



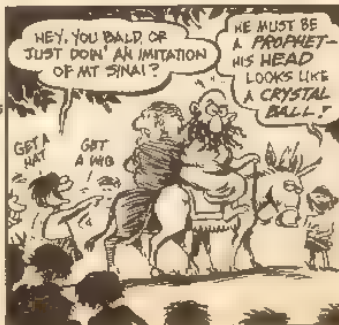
ELISHA SLAUGHTERED HIS OXEN, FED HIS NEIGHBORS, AND RAN OFF TO JOIN ELIJAH.*

I TAKE BACK ANYTHING I MAY HAVE SAID ABOUT TROUBLE-MAKING PROPHETS!

A FINE BOILED BEEF!



TO SEE THE SOMETIMES STAINED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ANCIENT ISRAELITES AND THEIR PROPHETS, WE MIGHT NOTE AN INCIDENT IN THE 2ND BOOK OF **KINGS**, IN WHICH THE PROPHET ELISHA IS MOCKED BY A CROWD OF CHILDREN.



GET A WAT GET A WAT

HEY, YOU BALD, OR JUST DON' AN IMITATION OF MT SINAI?

HE MUST BE A PROPHET — HIS HEAD LOOKS LIKE A CRYSTAL BALL!

SO ELISHA "CURSED THEM IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, AND THERE CAME FORTH TWO SHE-BEARS FROM THE WOOD AND TARE FORTY AND TWO CHILDREN OF THEM."

(2 KINGS 2 23-24)

WHEN YOU WRITE THIS STORY, MAKE SURE TO LEAVE OUT ALL THE TIMES THE BEARS DIDN'T SHOW UP.*



NOW 15 YEARS PASS...
ELIJAH WAS DEAD; AHAB
WAS DEAD; AHAB'S SON
JORAM RULED ISRAEL,
AND HIS GRANDSON AHA-
ZIAH RULED JUDAH;
JEZEBEL STILL LIVED; AND
ELISHA, NOW A ROYAL
CONSULTANT AND LEADER
OF A LARGE BAND OF
PROPHETS, DECIDED THE
TIME HAD COME FOR A
FINAL SOLUTION TO THE
BAAL PROBLEM...

HE SENT ONE OF HIS PROPHETS TO SEEK OUT JEHU, AN
ESPECIALLY NASTY CAPTAIN OF CHARIOTS.



THE MESSENGER FOUND JEHU WITH SOME FRIENDS,
PULLED HIM INTO A HOUSE, ANOINTED HIM KING,
AND RAN OFF.

BLAT



JEHU AND HIS SUPPORTERS
DROVE TO JEZREEL,
WHERE KING AHAZIAH WAS
VISITING KING JORAM. FROM
THE TOWER THE WATCHMAN
REPORTED:

"THE DRIVING IS LIKE THE DRIVING
OF JEHU, SON OF NIMSHI; FOR
HE DRIVETH FURIOUSLY."



A COUPLE OF MESSENGERS LEFT THE CITY
WITHOUT COMING BACK, SO JORAM AND AHA-
ZIAH RODE OUT TO MEET JEHU PERSONALLY.
THIS WAS THE DIALOG:

IS IT PEACE,
JEHU?

WHAT PEACE, SO LONG
AS THE WHOREDOMS OF
THY MOTHER JEZEBEL AND
HER WITCHCRAFTS ARE
SO MANY??



AS JORAM TURNED TO FLEE, JEHU,
"WITH HIS FULL STRENGTH," PUT AN
ARROW THROUGH HIM??

I DON'T THINK IT'S PEACE,
AHAZIAH — UK?



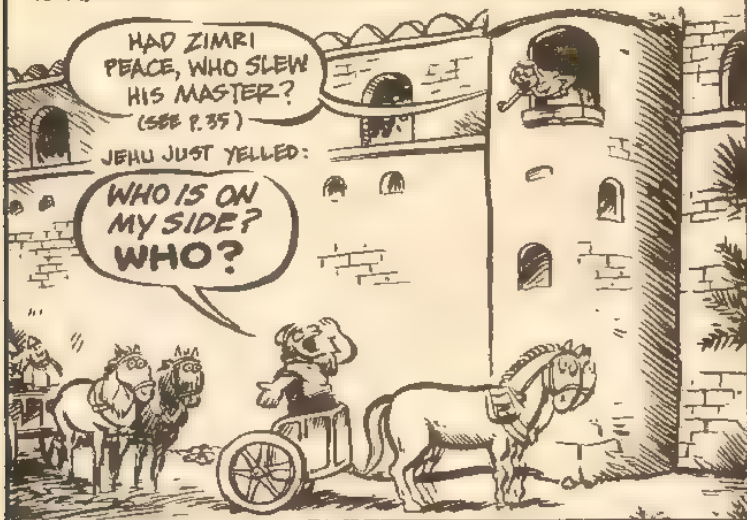
AFTER AHAZIAH, TOO, WAS CUT DOWN, JEHU RODE INTO TOWN TO FIND JEZEBEL. SHE APPEARED AT A WINDOW AND SAID:

HAD ZIMRI
PEACE, WHO SLEW
HIS MASTER?
(SEE P. 35)

JEHU JUST YELLED:

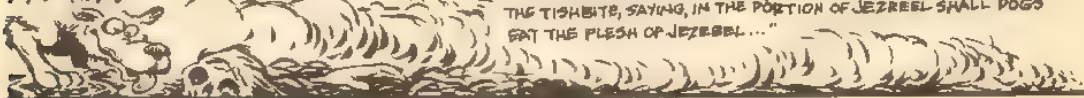
WHO IS ON
MY SIDE?
WHO?

TWO OR THREE EUNUCHS
STUCK OUT THEIR HEADS,
AND, AT JEHU'S ORDER,
THREW THE OLD QUEEN
DOWN.



JEHU'S CHARIOTS TRAMPLED HER BODY UNTIL NOTHING WAS LEFT BUT THE HANDS, FEET, AND HEAD.

"THIS IS THE WORD OF YAHUWAH, SPOKEN BY HIS SERVANT ELLAH THE TISHBITE, SAYING, IN THE PORTION OF JEZREEL SHALL DOGS EAT THE FLESH OF JEZEBEL...."



THEN HE WROTE TO THE ELDERS
IN CHARGE OF AHAB'S 70
CHILDREN, CHALLENGING THEM
EITHER TO FIGHT OR TO SEND
IN THE ROYAL HEADS. THE
ELDERS DIDN'T TAKE LONG
TO DECIDE.



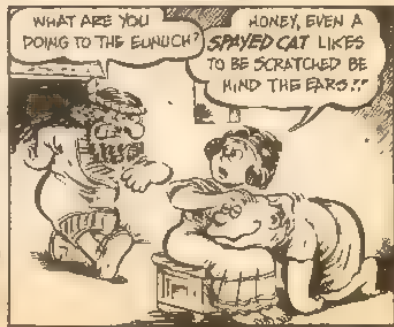
THE 70 HEADS WERE HEAPED IN TWO PILES AT THE
CITY GATE.



THE ORIGIN
OF EUNUCHS
SEEMS TO HAVE
BEEN ROOTED IN THE
WORSHIP OF ISHTAR,
THE BABYLONIAN SEX
GODDESS ('ASHTORETH'
IN THE BIBLE). SOME MEN,
IN A FRENZY OF DEVOTION,
WOULD CASTRATE
THEMSELVES AS A
WAY OF GIVING ISHTAR
THE THING SHE VALUED
MOST:



IN TIME, IT WAS
SEEN THAT EUNUCHS GREW
PLUMP AND
PASSIONLESS, SO
KINGS AND QUEENS
BEGAN KEEPING
A FEW OF THEM
AROUND AS
SERVANTS, AD
VISERS, AND ES
PECIALLY HAREM
GUARDS.



AFTER DISPOSING OF THE REST OF AHAH'S SERVANTS, PRIESTS, AND COURTIER, AS WELL AS 42 BROTHERS OF AHAZIAH, JEHU TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO BAAL WITH THIS CRYPTIC COUPLET:

AHAB SERVED BAAL A LITTLE;
BUT JEHU SHALL SERVE HIM
MUCH.



HE ANNOUNCED A GREAT SACRIFICE TO BAAL, WHICH NONE OF THE GOD'S PRIESTS, PROPHETS, OR WORSHIPPERS DARED TO MISS.



WHEN THE TEMPLE WAS PACKED FULL, JEHU'S SOLDIERS BARRED THE DOORS.



A GUARD WAS POSTED AROUND THE BUILDING, AND ALL INSIDE WERE SLAUGHTERED!



THE STATUES OF BAAL WERE BURNED; THE TEMPLE WAS KNOCKED DOWN AND MADE INTO A PUBLIC TOILET; AND THE WORSHIP OF BAAL IN ISRAEL WAS ENDED—FOR A WHILE, ANYWAY...



THE ONLY PORTRAIT WE HAVE OF ANY ISRAELITE KING SHOWS JEHU, BOWING TO THE ASSYRIAN **SHALMA-NESER III**, AROUND 830, B.C.



THE END?

ISRAEL EVENTUALLY RECOVERED FROM JEHU'S COUP, AND BY 750, B.C. WAS EVEN HAVING A **GOLDEN AGE**. NEW LAWS WERE WRITTEN AND THE ANCIENT TALES RETOLD...



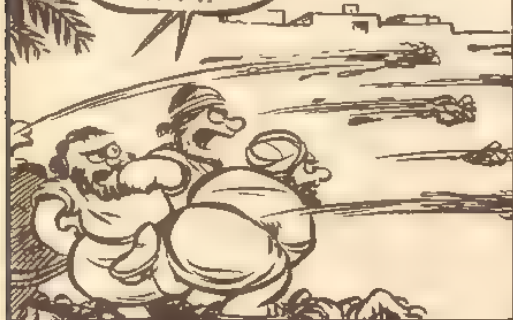
...WHILE THE PROPHET **AMOS** DENOUNCED LUXURY IN THE MIDST OF POVERTY (A COMMON FEATURE OF "GOLDEN AGES"?).

"WOE TO THEM THAT LIE ON BEDS OF IVORY... THAT DRINK WINE IN BOWLS AND ANOINT THEMSELVES... BUT ARE NOT GRIEVED BY THE AFFLICTIONS OF JOSEPH..."



THEN, ABOUT 740, B.C., AN ASSYRIAN TAXMAN WAS BUTCHERED BY SOME CITIZENS OF TYRE.

AND STAY OUT!!



THE ASSYRIAN ARMY SWEEP DOWN, COMMITTED THE USUAL ATROCITIES, AND TRAMPED THROUGH NORTHERN ISRAEL AS A SHOW OF STRENGTH.



BY COLLECTING AN EMERGENCY TAX OF 50 SHEKELS A HEAD, KING MENAHEM WAS ABLE TO BUY THEM OFF FOR A TIME...



...BUT THE SUDDEN POVERTY SPARKED A REVOLT, AND WITHIN 5 YEARS THE ASSYRIANS CAME BACK TO PUT IT DOWN!



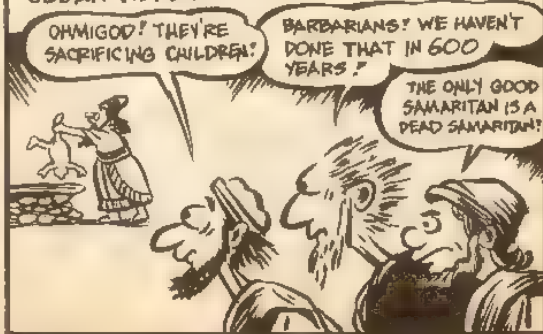
EACH TIME THEY CAME, THE ASSYRIANS MARCHED TENS OF THOUSANDS OF ISRAELITES OUT OF THE COUNTRY, RESETTLING THEM IN NORTHERN ASSYRIA, SOME 900 MILES AWAY. FINALLY, IN 722, B.C., SAMARIA, THE CAPITAL, FELL, 27,290 CITIZENS WERE REMOVED, AND, JUST LIKE THAT, THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL WAS FINISHED. THE DEPORTED POPULATION HAS BECOME KNOWN AS THE **TEN LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL**.



THE ASSYRIANS REPLACED THEM WITH A SIMILAR NUMBER OF PEOPLE FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE EMPIRE.



THE NEW ARRIVALS COMBINED THEIR OWN RELIGION WITH SOME ISRAELITE IDEAS AND BECAME THE **SAMARITANS**, THE FIRST JEWISH **SECT**. THE PEOPLE OF JUDAH WERE AGHAST!?



WITNESSING ISRAEL'S DISASTERS FROM NEIGHBORING JUDAH, THE PROPHET **ISAIAH** WROTE, "THE HEART OF HIS PEOPLE [WAS MOVED] AS THE TREES OF THE FOREST ARE MOVED WITH THE WIND."



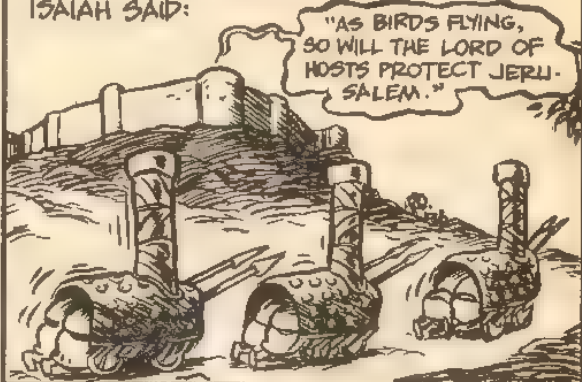
...AND THE KING OF JUDAH GAVE MANY GIFTS TO THE KING OF ASSYRIA."



HOWEVER, AT THE FIRST SIGN OF ASSYRIAN WEAKNESS, THE JUDEAN LEADERS BEGAN PLOTTING WITH THE EGYPTIANS...



...SO, IN 701, B.C., THE ASSYRIANS TRASHED A GOOD PART OF JUDAH, TOOK 200,000 PRISONERS, AND BESEIGED JERUSALEM. ISAIAH SAID:



THE ASSYRIANS WERE STRICKEN BY PLAGUE, LIFTED THE SEIGE, AND JERUSALEM WAS MIRACULOUSLY SAVED, AN EVENT WHICH LEFT A DEEP IMPRESSION.



BY CAREFULLY CHOOSING ITS ALLIES, THE ALL-BUT-RUINED KINGDOM OF JUDAH MANAGED TO SURVIVE ANOTHER 100 YEARS, ACTUALLY OUTLIVING THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE, WHICH FELL TO THE BABYLONIANS IN 612, B.C.

AND SO IT WAS THE BABYLONIANS, AND NOT THE ASSYRIANS, WHO FINALLY CONQUERED JUDAH. IN 597, B.C., THE EMPIRE-BUILDER **NEBUCHADREZZAR** TOOK JERUSALEM, MARCHED SOME 20,000 OF THE UPPER CLASSES BACK TO BABYLON, AND SET UP A PUPPET PRINCE, **ZEDEKIAH**, TO RULE OVER THOSE WHO REMAINED.



BUT ZEDEKIAH PLOTTED A REVOLT, SO IN 586, "NEBU" CAME BACK AND EXECUTED ZEDEKIAH'S SONS BEFORE HIS EYES.

AI, WHAT COULD BE MORE CRUEL THAN THIS?

YOU'LL SEE—
OR RATHER, YOU
WON'T...



THEN HE PUT OUT ZEDEKIAH'S EYES, THE LAST VIOLENT ACT OF THIS VOLUME, I PROMISE.

WHERE'D YOU GET THIS IDEA, SIRE?

EVER SEE "THE 3 STODGES GO TO BABYLON?"

YAAA



MANY OF THE REBELS ESCAPED TO EGYPT, WHILE NEBUCHADREZZAR TOOK A FEW THOUSAND MORE CAPTIVES BACK TO BABYLON.



IT WAS ANOTHER 70 YEARS BEFORE THE FAMOUS HANDWRITING ON THE WALL FORETOLD THE FREEDOM OF THESE CAPTIVES. STRANGE, ISN'T IT, THAT THEY SHOULD STILL HAVE WORSHIPPED A GOD WHO PROMISED THEM CANAAN, BUT GAVE THEM BABYLON INSTEAD ???

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS GRAFFITI—
"MENE MENE TEKEL UPHARSIN"?

HM... PHARSIN...
PHARSIN... SOMETHIN'
TO DO WITH PERSIANS,
I GUESS.

BY THE WATERS
OF BABYLON...

NEXT: THE SHAH
OF IRAN—
AND THE GREEKS??

DULL!

THAT'S WHAT MOST BOOKS ABOUT THE BIBLE ARE."

BASH BASH BASH

WELL WRITTEN? SOME? INFORMATIVE? MANY? CONTRADICTING EACH OTHER? MOST? AS GUT-WRENCHING AS THE ORIGINAL? NONE? NONE! NONE!?"



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LEVITICUS, BY M. NOTH; A NOTED SCHOLAR DISSECTS THE PRIESTLY LAWS. PREW!"

THE SEA TRADERS BY M. BOBY; THE DESIGNERS OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

THE ISRAELITES BY TIME-LIFE EDS. GOOD PIX

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